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**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
LOK SABHA**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2016-2017)**

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

EIGHTH REPORT

‘EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SELF HELP GROUPS’



सत्यमेव जयते

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2016/Agrahayana, 1938 (Saka)

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(2016-2017)**

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 16th December, 2016

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 16th December, 2016



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2016/Agrahayana, 1938 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

(2014-2015)

Shrimati Bijoya Chakravarty - Chairperson

Members

Lok Sabha

2. Shrimati Anju Bala
3. Kum. Sushmita Dev
4. Shrimati Rama Devi
5. Shrimati Jyoti Dhurve
6. Shrimati Bhavana Gawali
- 7.@ Smt. Riti Pathak
8. Shrimati Rakshatai Khadse
9. Shrimati Poonamben Maadam
10. Ms. Mehbooba Mufti
11. Shrimati Anupriya Patel
12. Shrimati Jayshreeben Patel
13. Shrimati Butta Renuka
14. Shrimati Satabdi Roy
15. Shrimati Mala Rajyalakshmi Shah
16. Shrimati Rita Tarai
17. Shrimati P. K. Sreemathi Teacher
18. Shrimati Savitri Thakur
19. Shrimati R. Vanaroja
- 20.# Smt. Supriya Sule

Rajya Sabha

- 21.* Shrimati Kanimozhi
22. Shrimati Jharna Das Baidya
23. Shrimati Vandana Chavan
24. Shrimati Mohsina Kidwai
25. Shri Anubhav Mohanty
26. Shrimati Kahkashan Perween
- 27.\$ Vacant
28. Shrimati Bimla Kashyap Sood
29. Shri A.V. Swamy
30. Shrimati Wansuk Syiem

- @ Smt. Riti Pathak was nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 05.02.2015 *vice* Smt. Shobha Karandlaje upon her resignation w.e.f. 3.12.2014
- # Smt. Supriya Sule was nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 05.02.2015
- * Shrimati Kanimozhi was nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 05.02.2015 *vice* Shrimati Jaya Bachchan upon her resignation w.e.f. 18.09.2014.
- \$ Sh. G. N. Ratanpuri retired w.e.f. 15.02.2015

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

(2015-2016)

Shrimati Bijoya Chakravarty - Chairperson

Members

Lok Sabha

2. Shrimati Anju Bala
3. Shrimati Renuka Butta
4. Km. Sushmita Dev
5. Shrimati Rama Devi
6. Shrimati Jyoti Dhurve
7. Shrimati Bhavana Gawali
8. Shrimati Raksha Khadse
9. Shrimati Poonamben Hematbhai Maadam
- 10.\$ vacant
- 11.# vacant
12. Shrimati Jayshreeben Patel
13. Shrimati Riti Pathak
14. Shrimati Satabdi Roy (Banerjee)
15. Shrimati Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
16. Shrimati Supriya Sule
17. Shrimati Rita Tarai
18. Shrimati P. K. Sreemathi Teacher
19. Shrimati Savitri Thakur
20. Shrimati R. Vanaroja

Rajya Sabha

- 21*. Shri Prabhat Jha
22. Shrimati Vandana Chavan
23. Shrimati Kanimozhi
- 24.% Vacant
25. Shri Anubhav Mohanty
26. Shrimati Kahkashan Perween
27. @ Vacant
- 28*. Ms. Dola Sen
29. Shri A.V. Swamy
30. Shrimati Wansuk Syiem

- * Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 20.06.2016
\$ Smt. Mehbooba Mufti, MP(LS) resigned w.e.f. 04.07.2016.
Smt. Anupriya Patel appointed as Minister w.e.f. 05.07.2016
@ Smt. Kanak Lata Singh, retired w.e.f. 04.07.2016
% Smt. Mohsina Kidwai retired w.e.f. 29.06.2016

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

(2016-2017)

Shrimati Bijoya Chakravarty - Chairperson

Members

Lok Sabha

2. Shrimati Anju Bala
3. Shrimati Renuka Butta
4. Km. Sushmita Dev
5. Shrimati Rama Devi
6. Shrimati Jyoti Dhurve
7. Shrimati Bhavana Gawali
8. Shrimati Darshanaben Jardosh
9. Shrimati Raksha Khadse
10. Shrimati Poonamben Hematbhai Maadam
11. Shrimati Jayshreeben Patel
12. Shrimati Riti Pathak
13. Sadhvi Savitri Bai Phoole
14. Shrimati Satabdi Roy (Banerjee)
15. Shrimati Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
16. Shrimati Supriya Sule
17. Shrimati Rita Tarai
18. Shrimati P. K. Sreemathi Teacher
19. Shrimati Savitri Thakur
20. Shrimati R. Vanaroja

Rajya Sabha

21. Shrimati Vandana Chavan
22. Shri Prabhat Jha
23. Shrimati Kanimozhi
24. Shri Anubhav Mohanty
25. Shrimati Rajani Patil
26. Shrimati Kahkashan Perween
27. Ms. Dola Sen
28. Shri A.V. Swamy
29. Shrimati Wansuk Syiem
30. Vacant

Secretariat

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1. | Shri N. C. Gupta | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Shri. T. S. Rangarajan | - | Director |
| 3. | Shri Khakhai Zou | - | Additional Director |
| 4. | Shrimati Raji Manish | - | Committee Assistant |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on Empowerment of Women, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Eighth Report on 'Empowering Women through Self Help Groups'.

2. Realising the importance of Self Help Groups and their contribution to the country's economy, the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2014-15) had selected this subject for detailed examination and Report to Parliament. In view of the vastness of the subject and the multiplicity of issues and stakeholders involved, the examination of the subject could not be completed during 2014-15 and was reselected in 2015-16 and 2016-17. In order to gain first hand knowledge on the subject, the Committee interacted with State Bank of Travancore, NABARD and Indian Bank as well as various SHGs and women entrepreneurs in Thiruvananthapuram, Kolkata, Chennai and Managalore during their study visits. The Committee also took oral evidence of the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Women and Child Development.

3. The Committee wish to express their sincere thanks to the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Rural Development), Ministry of Finance (Department of Financial Services) and Ministry of Women and Child Development for appearing before the Committee to tender evidence and furnishing the information desired by the Committee in connection with the issues relating to the subject.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 15 December, 2016.

5. For facility of reference and convenience, the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in Part II of the Report.

NEW DELHI
15 December, 2016
24 Agrahayana, 1938 (Saka)

BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY,
Chairperson,
Committee on Empowerment of Women

REPORT
PART I
NARRATION

A. Introductory

Empowerment of women is both a process as well as an outcome. As a process it entails means and ways through which a woman defines, challenges and overcomes the various barriers in her life and achieves the ability to shape her life and environment. Women's empowerment has three important and interdependent dimensions namely, economic, social and political empowerment. Economic empowerment essentially requires women to have greater access to and control over productive resources of the household as well as the community. Social empowerment necessitates fundamental changes to the complex set of social norms at the family and community levels resulting in improved status for women both in the family as well as in society. Political empowerment implies equal participation of women in the political processes at all levels. Among these three significant dimensions, women's economic participation and empowerment have been increasingly viewed as the corner stone contributing to strengthening women's rights, enabling women to have control over their lives and exert influence in society.

1.2 Studies have shown that women make enormous contribution to economy, whether in business, agriculture or as entrepreneurs, employees or by doing unpaid care work at home. However, as they remain largely affected by poverty, illiteracy, discrimination and exploitation, they get little opportunities to engage themselves in economic pursuits. Further, as women perform the bulk of household work, they often have little time left to pursue gainful activities outside home. It is into this quandary of lack of time and opportunities that the concept of Self Help Groups emerged paving pathways for providing women with the much needed economic support.

1.3 It has been proved that SHGs galvanize the energies of the poor women for productive purposes. They increase women's social and political visibility. SHGs provide space for self-help, mutual cooperation and collective action for social and economic

development. They promote savings, build-on own funds and act as the local financial institution to provide a range of financial services, including provision of credit for consumption and production purposes. Thus, SHGs enable women to overcome financial constraints affecting their economic development.

B. Synopsis on forming and functioning of SHGs

1.4 Self-Help Group (SHG) was conceived as a small voluntary association of 10-20 poor people, preferably from the same socio-economic background for the purpose of solving their common problems through self-help and mutual help. SHG can be an all-women group, all-men group, or even a mixed group but preferably an all-women group. The group need not be registered. From one family, only one member can join SHG.

1.5 Simple rules are required for SHGs to function like common agreement on when to meet, decision on time and place of meetings, agreement on amount of saving, giving small loans to each other, taking loan from banks, repayment habits etc. Training of the members is an important need for proper functioning of SHGs. The basic areas of training are training in basic accounts, writing of books, scheduling of meetings, social aspects like women empowerment and basics of lending money, borrowing, and repaying.

1.6 Every SHG need to do book keeping to ensure its smooth and efficient functioning. SHGs maintain (i) Minutes Book where the proceedings of meetings, the rules of the group, names of the members etc are recorded; (ii) Saving and Loan Register which show the savings of members separately and of the group as a whole and details of individual loans, repayments, interest collected, balance etc; (iii) Weekly Register which shows the summary of receipts and payments on a weekly basis and (iv) individual Members' Pass Books.

1.7 Once an SHG is formed, members start contributing money as savings. The amount of saving may be small but saving has to be regular and continuous habit with all the members. Soon after SHG is formed and one or two meetings are held where the savings are collected, a savings bank account can be opened in the name of the SHG. The Reserve Bank of India has issued instructions to all commercial banks and regional

rural banks permitting them to open SB accounts of registered or unregistered SHGs. SB account in the name of SHGs could be opened after obtaining the following documents from the Groups:

- (i) Resolution from the SHG: The SHG has to pass a resolution in the group meeting, signed by all members, indicating their decision to open SB account with the Bank. This resolution should be filed with the bank.
- (ii) Authorisation from the SHG: The SHG should authorise at least three members, any two of whom to jointly operate their account.
- (iii) Copy of the rules and regulations of the SHG: This document is not a must. If the group has not formulated any such rules or regulations, loans can be sanctioned without them.

1.8 Subsequent to opening the bank account, a passbook is issued to the SHG. This is issued in the name of the SHG and not in the name of any individual.

1.9 After saving for a minimum period of 2 to 3 months, the common savings fund should be used by the SHG for lending to its own members. The purpose, terms and conditions for lending to its members, rate of interest etc., may be decided by the group through discussions during its meeting. The interest is usually kept as 2 or 3 rupees per hundred rupee per month.

1.10 When the SHGs approach a bank for loan, loan is provided based on their performance. The factors that are generally taken into consideration for the assessment of an SHG are as follows:

Sl. No.	Factors to be checked	Rating Very Good	Rating Good	Rating Unsatisfactory
1.	Group Size	15 to 20	10 to 15	Less than 10
2.	Type of members	Only very poor members	2 or 3 not very poor members	Many not poor members
3.	Number of meetings	Four meetings in a month	Two meetings in a month	Less than two meetings in a month
4.	Attendance of members	More than 90%	70 to 90%	Less than 70%

5.	Participation of members	Very high level of participation	Medium level of participation	Low level of participation
6.	Savings collection within the group	Four times a month	Two times a month	Once a month
7.	Amount to be saved	Fixed amount	Varying amounts	-
8.	Interest on internal loan	Depending upon the purpose	12 to 24%	More than 24%
9.	Utilization of Savings amount by SHG	Fully used for loaning to members	Partly used for loaning	Poor utilization
10.	Loan recoveries	More than 90%	70 to 90%	Less than 70%
11.	Maintenance of books	All books are regularly maintained and updated	Most important registers (minutes, savings, loans, etc) are updated	Irregular in maintaining and updating books
12.	Accumulated savings	More than Rs. 5000/-	Rs. 3000-5000/-	Less than Rs. 3000/-
13.	Knowledge of the Rules of the SHG	Known to all	—	Not Known to all
14.	Knowledge of Govt. programs	All are aware of Govt. programs	Most of the members know about Govt. programs	No one knows

1.11 SHGs which come under the 'very good' category with grading between 12-16 can get loan immediately. SHGs with 10 to 12 'very good' factors need 3 to 6 months time to improve before loan is given. SHGs with rating of less than 10 factors will not be considered for loan.

1.12 The loan from Banks is always sanctioned and issued in the name of the SHG, not in the name of individual members. The amount of loan to the SHG can be to the tune of 1 to 4 times of its savings. The savings of a SHG comprise of the group's balance in the SB account, amount held as cash with the authorised persons, amount internally lent amongst the members, amount received as interest on the loans, any other contributions received by the group like grants, donation etc. Once the loan is obtained from the bank, a Self Help Group may grant loan to its members for various purposes. The bank does not decide the purposes for which the SHG gives loans to its members. The purpose can be emergency needs like illness in the family, marriage or

buying of assets for income generation. The Group will discuss and decide on the purpose for which loans are to be given to its members.

1.13 The documents that are necessary for obtaining loan from the banks are (i) inter-se agreements executed by all the members of the Self Help Group authorising a minimum of three members to operate the group's account with the bank; (ii) application by SHG for loan and (iii) a duly stamped agreement between the bank and the SHG wherein both the parties agree to abide by the terms and conditions set thereon.

1.14 The Reserve Bank of India has allowed the banks the freedom to decide on the interest rates to be charged to the SHGs. As far as the repayment of the loan is concerned, the entire members in the Group is responsible for the repayment of the loan. The other members in the Group exert moral pressure on the borrowing members for repayment. Thus usually, the banks get a much better repayment from the SHG. Collateral security is not necessary for the loans sanctioned to SHGs. The bank does not hold the SB account balance of the SHG as a security as this will prevent the SHG from lending from its internal savings.

1.15 Today, multiple agencies are involved in the promotion of SHGs viz; Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of women and Child Development, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), World Bank, IFAD, State Governments and various agencies supported by government, NABARD, RBI and so on.

C. Origin and Growth of SHG Movement in India

1.16 The concept of microfinance is the brainchild of Prof. Mohammed Yunus, professor of Economics in Chitgaon University of Bangladesh who experimented with a new approach to rural credit in Bangladesh by initiating an action research project called 'Grameen Bank'. The project started in 1976 and it was formally recognised as a bank in 1983. The Grameen Bank provided loans to the landless poor, particularly women, to promote self employment. India adopted Bangladesh's model in a modified form.

1.17 In 1970, Ilaben Bhat, founder of SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) in Ahmedabad had developed a concept of women and microfinance. However, the concept of SHGs was first developed in the present sense in the southern state of

Karnataka. A few NGOs with a large presence such as MYRADA (Mysore Resettlement and Development agency) promoted and nurtured SHGs systematically in the Eighties in Karnataka. The approach was simultaneously adopted by International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) for the projects funded by them in several parts of the country. Encouraged by early results from the SHGs, NABARD launched an action research project in 1989 and in 1991-92 NABARD started promoting SHGs. Under the SHG-Bank Linkage Model pioneered by NABARD in 1992, women in a village were encouraged to form SHGs. In 1993 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) also allowed SHGs to open savings accounts in Banks and thereby gave a fillip to the movement.

1.18 The NABARD SHG- Bank linkage program that began in 1992 acted as a catalyst for the growth of the SHG movement. The State governments of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala along with several NGOs and the banking sector as well as multilateral agencies such as IFAD contributed to the SHG movement. In the mid-1990s, IFAD promoted a project covering six states which came to be known as *Swa-shakti* project. This was subsequently taken over by the World Bank for extended support. Under this project, SHGs were promoted in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. These groups provided a base from which the movement spread to several districts in these States.

1.19 The projects supported by IFAD, the UN, the World Bank and several donor agencies specifically contributed to the growth of SHGs in the southern states. The Tamil Nadu Women's Empowerment Project, an IFAD supported project implemented through Tamil Nadu Women's Development Corporation was the first project in the country to incorporate the SHG concept into a State sponsored program. The UNDP(United Nation's Development Programme) supported South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP) in Andhra Pradesh in the '90s also adopted the SHG-centered approach which actually formed the model for several World Bank supported projects in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project (APDPIP) and Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project (APRPRP) supported by the World Bank resulted in promotion of

SHGs and their federations in all villages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. This brought about a massive increase in the number of SHGs promoted and bank linked. The World Bank has also been supporting a similar project in Tamil Nadu viz., Tamil Nadu PudhuVazhvu Project (TNPVP) while the state of Kerala has systematically promoted a neighborhood group centered model on its own named 'Kudumbashree', which is akin to the SHG model.

1.20 The states other than those in the South are also catching-up but relatively slowly. The World Bank funded 'Jeevika' project in Bihar, the 'Mission Mangalam' project in Gujarat, the DPIP projects in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan have also contributed to the growth of SHGs in a good number of districts. West Bengal has been quite successful in promoting SHGs with the support of the centrally sponsored Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). The World Bank funded 'TRIPTI' project in Odisha has also been promoting SHG based livelihoods in Odisha. The IFAD supported projects in select districts of Assam, Meghalaya and Manipur have also led to SHG development in select districts of North-East.

1.21 A major reform in SHG sector took place in 1999, when Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development was transformed into *Swarnjayanti Gram SwarozgarYojana* (SGSY). Self-employment through organizing the poor into SHGs became the cornerstone of the new poverty alleviation strategy. During 1999-2011, SGSY contributed to the growth of SHGs across the country. The centrally sponsored SGSY was implemented by all States and Union Territories in the country for more than a decade, mobilizing about 2.5 Crore rural BPL households into the SHG network. However, the progress has not been uniform and all SHGs promoted could not be sustained for want of adequate capacity building and nurturing support. Further, a substantial section of the poor and the vulnerable remained outside the SHGs. Hence, in order to address the shortcomings of SGSY and to provide a greater fillip to women empowerment, the Government of India restructured SGSY and launched National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) in June 2011.

D. National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)

1.22 NRLM, as a program builds on the strengths of SGSY and incorporates the learning from the best practices emerging from successful rural livelihood programs implemented in several States in the country, especially States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. NRLM aims to reach out to the rural poor through organization of women SHGs and federations. It aims to give them handholding support to help them come out of the circle of abject poverty and rural debt by providing them with credit they need for coming out of 'health shocks' or livelihood issues. A comparative analysis of the State wise list of functional SHGs under NRLM as in February, 2015 and August 2016 is given in **Annexure I**. A list of State-wise details of the SHG federation formed under NRLM at village and cluster level as in August 2016 is given in **Annexure II**.

1.23 The key features of the NRLM are as follows:

- i) Universal Social Mobilization: At least one women member from each identified rural poor households, will be brought under the Self Help Group (SHG) network in a time bound manner. NRLM ensures adequate coverage of vulnerable sections of the society in such a way that 50% of the beneficiaries are SC/STs, 15% are minorities and 3% are persons with disability, while keeping in view the ultimate target of 100% coverage of BPL families.
- ii) Promotion of Institutions of the poor: Strong quality institutions of the poor such as SHGs and their federations are set up on priority. They empower the poor and act as instruments of knowledge and technology dissemination, and hubs of production, collectivization and commerce. There are existing institutions of the poor women (SHG) formed by Government efforts and efforts of NGOs. NRLM would strengthen all existing institutions of the poor in a partnership mode.
- iii) Training, Capacity building and Skill Building: N.R.L.M. ensures that the poor are provided with the requisite skills for managing their institutions, linking up with markets, managing their existing livelihoods, enhancing their credit absorption capacity and credit worthiness. A multi-pronged approach is adopted for providing continuous capacity building of the targeted families, SHGs, their federations, government functionaries, bankers, NGOs and other key stakeholders. Focus is to develop and engage

community professionals and community resource persons (CRP) for capacity building of SHGs and their federations and other collectives.

iv) Revolving Fund and Community Investment Fund (CIF): Funds to community are made available in the form of revolving fund and community investment fund. Revolving Fund is provided to the SHGs and CIF to federation for onward lending to members towards meeting their credit needs.

v) Universal Financial Inclusion: N.R.L.M. works on both demand and supply side of financial inclusion. On the demand side, it promotes financial literacy among the poor and provides catalytic capital to the SHGs and their federations. On the supply side, it coordinates with the financial sector and encourages use of Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) based financial technologies, business correspondents and community facilitators like 'Bank Mitras'.

vi) Provision of Interest Subsidy: To ensure affordable credit for the rural poor, NRLM has made a provision for subsidy on interest rate above 7% per annum for all NRLM SHGs, who have availed loans from mainstream financial institutions. In selected 150 districts in the country, an additional 3% interest subvention is provided to all SHGs on prompt repayment of loans.

vii) Convergence and partnerships: On mobilization of poor into SHGs, NRLM encourages the institutions to seek convergence with various programs and with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for accessing their rights and entitlements. NRLM also encourages working with Civil Society Organisations in furthering its objectives wherever it is required/possible.

viii) Sensitive Support Structures: NRLM's process-intensive effort requires dedicated human resources. Realizing this, NRLM has set up sensitive and dedicated support structures at the National, State, district and sub-district levels. NRLM Advisory, Coordination and Empowered Committees and National Mission Management Unit (N.M.M.U.) at the national level, State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs) as autonomous bodies and State Mission Management Units at state level, District Mission Management Units at district level, and sub-district units at block and/or cluster levels

would constitute these support structures. The institutions of the poor, their staff and other social capital would also provide the support. These structures would have suitable linkages with Government(s), District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs), and PRIs. These support structures would be staffed with professionally competent and dedicated human resources through appropriate arrangements including partnerships and outsourcing of services.

1.24 The major features of the financial framework of NRLM are as follows:

- The allocation for Grants in Aid among the states and union territories is made on the basis of inter-se poverty ratios fixed by the Planning Commission except in the case of J&K where fund allocation is made on need basis to achieve the target of covering all vulnerable households, estimated at 2/3rd of the total number of households within a period of five years from 2013-14. This special programme in J&K named '*Umeed*' has the approval of Cabinet.
- NRLM also has a provision of Interest Subvention to women SHGs availing Bank loans upto Rs. 3.00 lakhs. This interest subvention ensures availability of loan @ 7% per annum. The State-wise allocation for this Interest Subvention is made by giving 50% weightage to poverty ratio and 50% weightage to loan outstanding of SHGs. In select 250 districts an additional subvention of 3% is also allowed on timely repayment of loans reducing the effective interest rate to 4%. A list of these 250 districts is given in **Annexure III**.
- NRLM has a provision for Revolving Fund to SHGs at the rate of Rs. 10,000 to Rs.15,000 per SHG.
- 25% of the NRLM allocation is earmarked for Placement Linked Skill Development which seeks to build the Skills of the poor rural youth and place them in relatively higher wage employment sectors of the economy. This component of NRLM is implemented in partnership with public, private, non-government and community organizations. Under this component a special programme named '*Himayat*' is also being implemented in the State of J&K with 100% central funding.

- NRLM provides for an assistance of Rs. 7,500/- per member for Capacity Building and Rs. 10,000/- per SHG for Institution Building.
- The core financial support under the programme is provided only to SHGs, their federations and livelihoods organizations of the SHG members in the 'intensive' blocks through a grant called Community Investment Support Fund, which will be used by the Federations to advance loans to SHGs and to under-take socio economic activities. The Community Investment Support Fund is in the nature of a resource in perpetuity which is not self-extinguishing in nature. The maximum amount admissible for Community Investment Support Fund is Rs. 2.50 lakh per SHG.
- NRLM also has a provision for utilization of 20% (25% in case N.E states and Sikkim) of the allocation to meet critical gaps in common infrastructure including marketing infrastructure.
- The programme also provides support for establishing Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) in each district of the country in collaboration with the Banks and the State Governments to provide training to the rural youth from the poor households to take-up economic activities. Each RSETI is provided a Capital Grant of Rs. 1.00 crore for setting up their building infrastructure. Support is also provided to meet the training cost at prescribed rates.
- NRLM is supported by a World Bank credit of USD 500 million for implementation of the National Rural Livelihoods Project (NRLP) in 13 high poverty states accounting for about 90 percent of the rural poor in the country viz., Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. This Project provides technical assistance for different components and financial support for setting-up implementation structures in these states.

1.25 The funding pattern under different components of NRLM (State-wise) is as follows:

NRLM, MKSP and Interest Subvention (Category-II)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Central Share (%)	State Share (%)
1.	Non-NE States (excluding Jammu & Kashmir)	60	40
2.	North Eastern States and Jammu & Kashmir.	90	10
3.	Union Territories	100	0

Skill Development

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Central Share (%)	State Share (%)
1.	Non-NE States	60	40
2.	North Eastern States	90	10
3.	Himayat Projects in Jammu & Kashmir	100	0

RSETI

1.	All States/UTs	100	0
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(i) Support structures for NRLM

1.26 When asked about the framework of implementation of NRLM and the details of the organizational structure of the support system/management units at the national, State, District and Block/sub district levels, the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) submitted as under:

"At the national level, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) is required to provide technical and professional support to the states to establish the Mission societies, implementation architecture and systems and guide them in the implementation and monitor their progress. For this, NRLM Empowered Committee (EC) has been set up which reviews and approves the Implementation Plans and Annual Action Plans and release the funds to SRLMs. The Joint Secretary/Additional Secretary, Rural Livelihoods (RL), MoRD leads NRLM as Mission Director and Chief Executive officer (CEO) of National Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (NRLPS) with the Union Minister In-charge of the Ministry/Department dealing with the Society shall be the ex-officio President of the Society. NRLPS comprises of multidisciplinary team of professionals from open market on contract, and requisite support staff to provide wide ranging professional and technical support to the National Rural Livelihoods Mission and the State Rural Livelihoods Missions in the implementation of their Mission Objectives.

At the state level, the State Rural Livelihoods Mission (SRLM) constituted by State Government, would oversee the implementation of all NRLM related activities in the state. An autonomous body under the State Government, SRLM would be incorporated as a society, trust or company. State Mission Management Unit (SMMU) would implement the NRLM activities in the state through an SMMU, at the state level, headed by a full-time State Mission Director (SMD). A multidisciplinary SMMU team would comprising of experts in Social Inclusion, Financial Inclusion, Livelihoods, Programme Management, Programme Support etc., would support the SMD in implementing NRLM in the state.

District Mission Management Unit (DMMU): The DMMU of the SRLM would be responsible for meeting NRLM objectives and implementing NRLM activities in the district. DMMU, linked suitably with DRDA, would be a facilitating and support unit for field structures. A multidisciplinary DMMU, led by District Mission Manager (DMM), hired from open market on contract or on deputation from Government, includes functional specialists in Social Inclusion, Financial Inclusion, Livelihoods, Capacity Building, Programme Management, Programme Support etc., and support staff, as required. These specialists and staff would be hired in a phased manner, as required, on contract or on deputation.

Support Structures at Sub-district level: The Sub-district level Support Structure is either a Block Mission Management Unit (BMMU) led by a Block Mission Manager (BMM) and consisting of 3-5 spearhead teams or a Project Facilitation Team at cluster (sub-block) level. The members of sub-district structure(s), including the BMMs, if any, would be recruited from the open market or on deputation."

(ii) Pace of NRLM coverage in States

1.27 NRLM has set out with an agenda to reach out, mobilize and support 7 crore BPL households across 600 districts, 6000 blocks, 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats, in 6 lakh villages in the country into their self-managed SHGs and their federal institutions and livelihoods collectives. NRLM's long-term dedicated sensitive support would be with them and extend facilitation support in all their efforts to get out of poverty. In addition, the poor would be facilitated to achieve increased access to their rights, entitlements and public services, diversified risk and better social indicators of empowerment. Being

a process intensive programme, NRLM has adopted a phased implementation strategy to reach out to all rural poor households by 2024-25.

1.28 Though, NRLM was launched in June 2011, only 3 states had transited to NRLM during FY 2011-12, after meeting the transition conditions viz., establishment of an autonomous Mission society at the state level and setting-up of implementation structures at the state, district and block levels with dedicated manpower. However, 9 more states had transited during FY 2012-13. As of March, 2015, all states, except Goa, and the UT of Puducherry had transited to N.R.L.M. As of August, 2016 Goa and Pondicherry are in the process of instituting reporting mechanisms. It has been informed that notwithstanding the initial delays, the Mission has gathered momentum from financial year 2013-14 onwards and is now poised for a big leap.

1.29 When the Committee desired to know whether cultural barriers such as religion, caste and creed play any role in the formation of SHGs, the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) submitted the following:

"Cultural barriers such as religion, caste and creed do not play any role in the formation of SHGs in the villages. SHG formation is driven by women members in a defined geography (location). These members are economically poor and belong to marginalised sections of society. Each SHG consists of women members (10-15 members) at the rate of one woman member from every poor household in the village".

1.30 The Committee were further informed that the basic principles of the SHGs are group approach, mutual trust, group cohesiveness, spirit of thrift, demand based lending, collateral free, women friendly loan, peer group pressure in repayment, skill training, capacity building and empowerment. As members of SHGs under NRLM, they follow the *Panchsutra* i.e. regular meetings, regular savings, regular internal lending, regular repayment and regular bookkeeping. They access financial services like savings, loans, etc. and skill building support through their groups.

(iii) Uneven distribution of SHGS

1.31 During the study visits undertaken to various parts of the country, the Committee, observed that the development of SHGs throughout the country is uneven and that the Southern States have witnessed more success stories of SHGs in comparison to Northern and North Eastern States. The Committee also noticed that disbursement of credit to SHGs has remained skewed in favour of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. On enquiring upon the reasons for the same, the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) stated as under:-

" The reason is, of course, higher level of literacy down south than the national SHG movement having started from the south. A lot of international programmes started from there wherein they project their best practices. Having said that, now NRLM is spreading very well. Now, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Bihar are doing very well. It is our effort to get one State at a time and by 2022, we hope the concern of uneven spread will not be there."

1.32 In the above context, the Ministry of Finance (DFS) in a written reply, among other things, stated as under:-

"The main reason for higher disbursement of credit in favour of Southern States is the support available from the State Governments, socio economic milieu, concentration of bank branches, relatively adequate staff to handle adequate number of accounts, higher level of financial literacy and social awareness. The main reasons for low level of SHG promotion in North Eastern Region is difficult terrain, socio cultural climate and lack of adequate bank branches."

1.33 When the Committee suggested that the States in northern part of the country may be covered under SHGs as the southern States, the Ministry of Rural Development submitted as follows:

"You have given a wonderful suggestion that all the states of North India should also be covered like the States in south. It is the direction of the Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development also that we should repeat the success of southern states in the northern states too. Thus special emphasis has been laid on the States of north India under the programme formulated for the expansion of livelihood mission..... For example, I would like to submit that the expansion programme is being operationalized in Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Rajasthan but it will take some time to

cover all the states. This programme is being operationalized in all the States in the east and north. Your suggestion is very nice that there should be full coverage of the programme in all States. We are working towards it. But it will take some time as it involves the intensive process of community building which is time consuming."

1.34 With regard to the spread of SHGs under NRLM in North Eastern States, the Ministry of Rural Development(DRD) submitted during the briefing as follows:

"With great difficulty, we started the scheme in Nagaland. We were not sure whether it would succeed or not. It succeeded well. Then we entered Mizoram; we entered Meghalaya. There is some lack of effort on part of the State Governments also. We are pursuing with them. The States like Sikkim, Arunachal and Manipur have to set up a mission. First the State Government has to set up implementation machinery. Even though they have transited to NRLM, yet we are pursuing with them."

(iv) Formation of SHGs in Remote Parts of the Country

1.35 The Committee, apprehending that target based approach of SHG formation would result in formation of SHGs in approachable village and of groups who are easier to reach, thereby, excluding those living in remote villages dispersed habitations and poorest households, wished to know about the mechanism available with the Government to address this issue, specifically with regard to women. In response, the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) submitted the following reply:

"NRLM does not follow the target based approach for SHG formations. The States have the flexibility for preparing their Annual Action Plan for their States as per the availability of the resources and funds also taking into accounts various other factors that facilitate implementation of the programme.

Being a process intensive programme, NRLM has adopted a phased implementation strategy to reach out to all rural poor households by 2024-25. In the process of phased implementation, the selection of districts and blocks for intensive implementation of the programme is done in an objective manner keeping in view the poverty criterion based on the Human Development Indices. The remote villages, dispersed habitations and poor households, therefore do not get excluded in the process. NRLM also ensures adequate coverage of vulnerable sections of the society such that 50% of the beneficiaries are members from SC/STs, 15% from minorities group and 3% from persons with disabilities. The target group under NRLM is determined by a well defined,

transparent and equitable process of Participatory Identification of Poor at the level of the community. The list so finalized is required to be vetted by the Gram Sabha and approved by the Gram Panchayat."

(v) Formation of SHGs in Tribal Areas

1.36 When the Committee raised concern over the lack of involvement of the tribals in SHGs, the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Rural Development) stated as follows during the oral evidence:

"We realize that this area need attention. In your State of Kerala, I would like to share with you the tribal pocket of Attapadi where one of the special projects is there under the Rural Livelihood Mission. It is a nutrition project in Attapadi. In fact, in the month of September, we are doing a national consultation. There are interventions in tribal children in Attapadi. It is a successful project."

(vi) Capacity building of SHG Members

1.37 State Rural Livelihood Missions have developed the following training modules for capacity building of women SHGs:

For SHG members – Training is imparted in 7 modules for about 20 days on SHG formation, SHG concepts and management, SHG credit linkages, VO concepts, participatory identification of poor (PIP), gender and women empowerment, leadership, visioning and planning exercise (organization development).

For SHG leaders – in addition to the above, 2 modules are used for imparting training for about 6 days on SHG concepts, management and leadership and micro credit plan.

For book keepers – Training in 4 modules is imparted for about 16 days on SHG concepts and bookkeeping (primary), secondary books, refresher training I and refresher training II.

These trainings are in addition to the immersion visits to best practicing SHGs.

(vii) Skill Development under Livelihoods Mission

1.38 With regard to the allocation for skill development aspect under Livelihood Mission, the Ministry of Rural Development stated as under:

"we spent 25 per cent resources of Livelihood Mission(Ajeevika) on skill development. several States have suggested that this amount is not sufficient and more resources are required to impart training to women. It is under consideration of the Government to do away with the ceiling of 25 per cent i.e. 1/4th of the resources under Livelihood Mission to be spent on skill development and the work of skill development should be intensified as per the need.

1.39 The Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Rural Development) stated that in SHG bank linkage programme, it is not only the livelihood activities that are being given attention to. In order to enhance the living conditions of the poor, it has a 'seven steps out of poverty' roadmap. The Ministry elucidated on this aspect as follows during the briefing:

"It is a comprehensive programme which starts with social mobilization, goes on to institution building, then it talks about financial linkage and then it talks about livelihood. We do not leave it at that. We then talk about social development where we talk about issues like health, sanitation, nutrition, education and so on that is required for quality of life. Finally, we come to a stage where we talk about social protection by way of insurance or pensions so that they do not lapse into poverty. So, we are talking about a complete 360 degree support and we are not talking only about giving them support up to the livelihood stage."

(viii) Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs)

1.40 NRLM also has a scheme to set up Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs), one in each district in collaboration with the banks and the State Government to provide training to the rural BPL youth to enable them to take up in-situ self-employment. So far, 582 RSETIs have been opened in the country and 9,00,957 women have been trained upto February, 2015. The candidates chosen for training are sourced from various channels. The DRDAs, Bank branches, and other agencies can sponsor candidates. Entrepreneurship Awareness Programs are conducted regularly by the Director, RSETI to generate more applications. As it is necessary to select suitable candidates possessing a minimum level of Entrepreneurial traits and some primary skills, every candidate has to appear for a written test / interview before selection. In respect of skill development programmes, candidates are selected through some simple Skill Tests, in the respective vocation / trade. A Written skill test is also conducted if the applicants are in large number. The RSETIs are expected to train 750 rural poor youth each year to take up self employment in the area they reside. NABARD also gives due recognition to training and capacity building of various

stakeholders such as bankers, NGOs, Government agencies, SHG members and trainers to leverage the success of SHGs.

(ix) Production related issues faced by SHGs

1.41 During the study tours, the Committee interacted with various Self Help Groups from different parts of the country and were informed that availability of good raw materials at reasonable price, packing and labelling of the products, variety in designs, availability of a permanent market etc. are some of the major issues faced by SHGs.

1.42 When the Committee wished to know about the capacity building aspect related to designs in the products made by SHGs, the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Rural Development) replied during the evidence:

"Now we are in constant touch with these design agencies whether it is the National Institute of Design or the State level design institutes or even polytechnics where children are there who do the designing and we are trying to link those with the SHGs. We realise quality and issue plus they require some kind of inputs for them to change what they have been doing for years together. That is one thing which we are doing in a small way."

(x) Surviving in the competitive market

1.43 Lack of adequate markets to sell the products is a major hurdle in the growth of SHGs. Further, surviving the tough competition in the market where much cheaper products are available is also a hard task for many SHGs. When the Committee wished to know about the interventions made by the Government to promote the products of SHGs, the representative of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Rural Development) stated as follows:

"First of all, I must admit that market linkage is a weak link. For SHGs, market linkage is weak, which we are admitting. Honestly, we have not really cracked it to the extent we want to do. But at the same time, what we are doing is we are trying to hold mini fairs at the centralised level. Now, we hold an international fair in Delhi at the centralised level and we hold an additional fair in all the States. We have also authorised the States to hold some more fairs; we give assistance only for one fair. We encourage them to spend out of their own money and several States are doing it also. The ones who see value in it, they do it. Marketing through fairs is one thing."

We are also tentatively examining e-commerce, e-portal and how to link up the SHG products with the e-portal. We are aware that they have to compete with very, very strong private sector and even a stronger Chinese market. We are, however, helping only in traditional ways. We have a permanent gallery at Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan where we are marketing their products. There, about 900 groups' products are being displayed and sold. Apart from that, several of the District Collectors have given space free of cost in their premises where they go and market their products. So, constantly, we are trying to open more marketing channels. But at the end of the day, it would be the SHGs' own efforts and own initiative because the programme is talking about empowering the women and it is not about creating dependency syndrome that we do it for them and then only they can do it.

There are several movements now. I have personally seen some SHGs who have started even exporting things like purses, handicrafts and so on. We are trying hard."

1.44 Supplementing on this aspect, the Chairman, NABARD stated as follows during the oral evidence:

"Most of the produce, leave out some five or 10 per cent, is such that it is for local consumption. The success of marketing would depend on what kind of quality they produce because they have the best knowledge of markets which are local. Those groups do well who produce for local areas. For that, there are local Haats and local fairs. Not only that, we also supplement through these fairs. Locally, they are organized and they are giving training. During the day how much they have sold, at the end of the day what pricing strategy they should have, what display mechanism they should have, they are given lessons in that also. In addition, we have also made a small beginning. Two e-portals have been launched recently by NABARD. The major challenge which is there, it is not launching the e-portal, is really knowing how much is the quantum of produce which is available and what is the quality of produce that is available. Unless we have a mechanism for knowing on pan-India basis, the buyer has no mechanism to know what kind of assured quality which is being displayed would be available to him and at what price and whether it would be available throughout the year or not. We need to build that databank."

(xi) Individual activities for income generation

1.45 SHGs can engage in economic activity of their choice for income generation. The selection of activity is solely based on the local resources, marketability of the product and the aptitude and skill of the group. When the Committee enquired about the possibility of group members engaging themselves in individual activities for income generation instead of collective activities, the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Rural Development) replied as follows during the oral evidence:

"We are not forcing a group activity in a group. So, it is possible that within a group, there may be some willing who may be doing dairy, there may be some willing who may be doing some handicraft. There is absolutely no bar. The only thing that we have stopped under the NRLM is that we have stopped giving to individual people because that is leading to a lot of NPAs. Money is given to the group and that group can give it to three different people for three different activities. They can give it to all the different people for different activities. The group as a whole is responsible for payment of money. So, there is absolutely no restriction that the entire group should be doing the same economic activity."

(xii) Monitoring of SHGs

1.46 When the Committee wished to know about the system in place to monitor the functioning of SHGs, Ministry of Finance (Department of Financial Services) submitted the following in their written reply:

"The Government has put in place real time reports to monitor the functioning of SHGs on a monthly frequency which may be seen at www.nrmlbl.aajeevika.gov.in. This provides a Management Information System (MIS) for the SHG-Bank linkage. Other than this, there are MIS for SHG level transactions managed at the State level or project level. State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs) such as Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kudumbashree and large NGOs such as SKDRDP, RGMVP have their own MIS to monitor the functioning of SHGs."

(xiii) Role of NGOs in the growth of SHGs

1.47 NGOs have played a key role in organising and nurturing SHGs. The existing programme of NRLM has provision for partnership with NGOs and other Civil Society

Organizations at two levels for capacity building and implementation of the programme at the block level. When the Committee wished to know about the role of NGOs in the formation and promotion of SHGs in the rural areas, in capacity building of women members of SHGs and providing assistance to them in acquiring bank finance etc., the Ministry of Rural Development submitted the following reply:

"SRLMs partner with NGOs in two ways –

- i) Wherever there is a significant mobilization of SHGs in a particular geographical area (block) facilitated by an NGO, SRLM seeks to partner with the NGO along with the federal institution of the poor to saturate the area in terms of mobilization, institution building, capacity building, social, financial and economic inclusion/bank finance.
- ii) SRLM encourages the field units and the institutions of poor to take support of resource organizations to provide any specific expertise/technical assistance to the SHGs and their federations as per their needs. This may include training, planning, and livelihood support.

1.48 When the Committee sought information about the leading NGOs that promote SHGs, the Ministry of Rural Development informed that no database of NGOs working with SHGs is available with N.R.L.M. Division.

(xiv) Need for convergence of SHG with other programmes

1.49 The Committee has observed that a host of agencies promote SHGs under a number of programs and schemes. Rural Development Department promotes SHGs under NRLM, Tribal Welfare Department has certain programs implemented through SHGs. Women and Child Development Department has its own SHG schemes financed through Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, NABARD and Banks create their own SHGs through NGOs. In addition, NGOs themselves directly avail donor funds from international agencies and create and nurture their own SHGs. When the Committee desired to know about the effect of multiple agencies implementing and promoting SHGs, their differing objectives and approaches on the concept of Self Help and the coordination among different Self Help Group Promoting Institutions (SHGPIs), the Ministry of Rural Development stated in their written replies as follows:

" SHGs are being promoted by multiple agencies, but around the concept of 'self-help'. Most of them undertake savings and inter-lending and conduct regular meetings. The promoting agencies provide them capacity building nurturing support as well as book keeping support in the initial phase. There is no mechanism to coordinate SHGs promoted by different agencies. However NRLM takes into its fold only such SHGs which are compliant with basic NRLM norm i.e. 70% of the members must belong to the poor households".

1.50 When the Committee wished to know whether SHGs are linked or being linked to MGNREGA, the Ministry of Rural Development replied as follows:

"As per the Implementation Framework of NRLM convergence with MGNREGA is an integral part of the programme. The State Governments are advised to promote convergence between SHGs and MGNREGA programme. NRLM facilitates the institutions of the poor at village level to avail the benefits under MGNREGA by creating awareness about their entitlements and rights. Further NRLM could link the poor whose lands have been developed under MGNREGA with technical inputs, skill development, bank credit and marketing.

1.51 When the Committee desired to know whether there is a need for converging the various schemes and programmes relating to SHGs by various stakeholders, the Ministry of Finance (DFS) submitted the following reply:

"Yes, there is a need for convergence of SHG BLP with NRLM and other state sponsored programmes. Considering the diverse nature of socio economic conditions in India and the vast geographical spread of the country, a multiagency approach with space for all the agencies is required for extending affordable financial services to the rural poor. Convergence of various programmes will lead to better use of available resources, improve quality of services, sustainable hand holding services to the rural poor and also significantly lower the cost of services being extended."

(xv) Political Empowerment of Women SHGs

1.52 With regard to the political empowerment of women through SHGs, the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) submitted as follows:

"Initially, it is only economic empowerment as they say but the interesting part of SHG is roughly in a typical Panchayat about 40 to 70 per cent of the women are

organised and they are organised in a village organisation also. So, first level of political empowerment which they demand is whatever is their right like NREGA work, pension and all that. Then, we find them attending Gram Sabhas. In a SHG area most of the Gram Sabha members are from SHGs. So, they are negotiating with the Panchayats. The last stage with find – we have gathered statistics from Kuttumbhshree – Kerala has 50 per cent reservation for elected members right from Gram Panchayat up to corporation. That is so both in urban and rural areas. So, 54 per cent of the elected members are from Kuttumbhshree. So, that took about 15 years. But that process is evident and I find in Andhra Pradesh many of the Sarpanchs are from SHGs."

(xvi) Swachh Bharat Mission and Women SHGs

1.53 With regard to expanding the role of women SHGs and making them a part of Swachh Bharat Mission, the Ministry of Rural Development stated as under:

"Women who are part of Self Help Groups are now requested to play a pivotal role under Swachh Bharat Mission to pave way for making open defecation free villages. When meetings of Panchayats and Gram Sabhas are held, it is also one of the ten points that women belonging to Self Help Groups should attend the meetings of Panchayats mandatorily so that their participation and voice could reach out to everyone. Similarly, Maharashtra has tried to involve everyone from child education to health".

1.54 In connection with the study tour of the Committee to Mangalore, when the Committee desired to know whether any guidance is given to SHGs who undertake waste disposal projects for hygienic disposal of waste. In reply, the NRLM Division, Karnataka stated as under:

"Yes. In the meetings of the Ward level federations and GP level federations waste disposal is being discussed regularly. Accordingly, necessary steps are being taken at village level. Further, under DAY-NRLM programme, 89 villages in 40 GPs are identified for ODF villages in collaboration with the Swachh Bharat Mission and UNICEF."

(xvii) Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)

1.55 Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) is a sub component of National Rural Livelihood Mission (Aajeevika) which aims to meet the specific needs of women farmers to enable them to achieve socio economic and technical empowerment. The scheme aims to empower women farmer through a number of interventions aimed to improve their productive participation in agriculture through improving their skills and

capabilities, giving them access to services of Government and tools and implements of drudgery reduction. Once the production capacities of women in agriculture improve, food security ensues for their families and communities. There are two streams under MKSP namely sustainable agriculture and Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP).

1.56 When the Committee wished to know about the funding pattern and functioning of MKSPs, the Ministry of Finance (DFS) submitted as under:

"The Ministry of Rural Development provides funding support of 75% (90% for North Eastern States) to the project submitted by the State Governments under MKSP. Balance is contributed by the respective State Government or any other donor agencies, national and international in the form of grants or the Project Implementing Agency. State Government, Panchayati Raj Institutions and Semi Government Organizations at the State and National level may pose projects under MKSP. Women-centric NGOs, CSO, CBOs, SHG Federations, Women Organizations active in agriculture activities may also submit proposal under MKSP. Projects pre appraised and recommended by the concerned State Government are considered for approval in this Ministry. The responsibility of monitoring/fund routing/Coordination is given to respective State Rural Livelihoods Missions for the projects approved under MKSP.

The total number of Mahila Kisan covered under MKSP is 32,06,129. The number of training conducted under MKSP for Mahila Kisans is 38,049. The number of training on sustainable agriculture, NTFP and livestock activity is 24,500, 8040 and 5509 respectively. The total number of women farmers (Mahila Kisan) trained on MKSP protocols is 13,99,787. The agriculture strategy adopted under the Project revolves around local natural resource based sustainable agriculture. The activities of the project may blend agriculture and allied sector activities as also the post-harvest processing activities that add value to the agricultural produce.

(xviii) Importance of Community Resource Persons

1.57 With regard to providing resource persons funded by the Government who will ensure the formation and functioning of SHGs in the initial stage, the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) has informed that under NRLM, the resource persons will be from the States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Bihar. Instead of solely relying on NGOs or on Governments, NRLM is relying on the women who have come out of SHGs.

These women will act as community resource persons and will help in social mobilisation and institution building.

(xix) Annual Auditing of SHGs

1.58 When the Committee sought to know information about the States which conduct SHG auditing and annual rating, the Ministry of Rural Development informed that auditing and annual grading practice has been initiated in many States even though it has not become a practice among all the States.

(xx) Impact evaluation of NRLM:-

1.59 When the Committee desired to know whether any assessment has been done about the achievements of NRLM so far, the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) submitted as under:

"NRLM was launched in June 2011, after restructuring SGSY. However, the states were required to transit to NRLM after meeting transition conditions *viz.*, establishment of an autonomous Mission society at the state level and setting-up of implementation structures at the state, district and block levels with dedicated manpower. Thus, only 3 states had transited to NRLM during FY 2011-12, while 9 more states had transited during FY 2012-13. As of March, 2015, all states, except Goa, and the UT of Puducherry have transited to N.R.L.M. The intensive implementation of the Mission in a phased manner started in most states in FY 2012-13 and gathered momentum during FY 2013-14. The National Mission Management Unit, MORD has recently conducted an internal assessment of the Mission in 13 states (states which are provided additional support with the World Bank/IDA credit) as a part of the Mid Term Review (MTR) of the World Bank aided NRLP. The report is available on www.aajeevika.gov.in. In addition, all states are required to undertake impact evaluation studies, starting with the baseline study. 13 states have conducted livelihoods assessment study. 8 states have submitted their final report while report from 5 states is awaited. For conducting impact evaluation of NRLM, a study has been commissioned, to be conducted by Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand, Gujarat. It is expected that study will be completed by the end of December, 2016 and the report is expected to be submitted during January-February, 2017."

E. Role of Banks in Promoting SHGs

1.60 After the success of the pilot programme launched by NABARD and instructions from RBI for mainstreaming SHG-BLP as a business activity of the banks, a Micro

Finance Development and Equity Fund (MFDEF) in NABARD with a corpus of Rs.500 crore was set up by the Government of India for supporting promotion, training and capacity building of SHGs and other supporting institutions. The phenomenal growth of the SHG programme from about 500 SHGs during the pilot phase in 1992 to a staggering number of 79 lakh SHGs till 2015-16 was possible due to the active support and involvement of Commercial Banks, Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks spread across the country. Today, about 10 crore rural households have access to the formal banking system through the SHG-Bank Linkage programme. These SHGs have a combined outstanding savings amount in excess of Rs. 13,600 crores with various banks of the country.. Besides extending credit, the banks have also played an equally important role in the training and capacity building of the rural women.

(i) Role of NABARD in the Growth of SHGs

1.61 Despite the vast network of bank branches, rural poor, especially women were deprived of access to such services. In this background, NABARD conceived the idea of reaching out to the poor in their own locations in group mode instead of individually. Working closely with the NGO 'MYRADA' and the SHGs formed by them, NABARD gave wings to the concept. Under the action research programme sanctioned by NABARD, MYRADA provided funds to SHGs. The success of Action research encouraged NABARD to launch a pilot in 1992 which envisaged linkage of 500 SHGs with banks by the end of 1994. The pilot was successful and 4750 SHGs were credit linked with bank loan of Rs 6.06 crore. Subsequently, based on the recommendations of the working Group constituted by RBI financing to SHGs was mainstreamed into the operations of the banks and accepted as a part of priority sector lending by RBI in April 1996. After mainstreaming the SHG-BLP, NABARD launched in 1998, a dream project of promotion and linkage of one million SHGs in 10 years. Due to the untiring efforts by NABARD and support extended by banks and other stake holders, the target of one million SHGs was achieved by 2005., three years before the schedule. As on 31 March 2016, 79.03 lakh SHGs have savings with banks to the tune of Rs 13691.39 crore. NABARD extends grant and other support to NGOs and other Self Help Promoting Institutions for promotion and nurturing of SHGs formed of rural poor women. Besides, training and capacity building of different stakeholders of SHG Bank Linkage

programme such as bankers, NGOs, government officials, SHG members and trainers is also carried out by NABARD.

(ii) Issues faced by SHGs in availing loan

1.62 The SHGs can avail bank loan up to 1 to 4 times of their savings. However, if the savings are less, SHGs are not able to obtain adequate loan from banks. This inadequate bank loans pose difficulties to the SHGs in extending sufficient amount of loans to their members to engage in economic activities.

1.63 The Committee, having observed during their study tours that many SHGs also face delay in obtaining financing from the Banks, desired to know about the measures taken by the Government to address this concern. In response, the Ministry of Finance (DFS) submitted the following in their written reply:

"Delay in financing/repeat financing is the major difficulty being faced by SHGs. Many of the SHGs which have a good credit history have not received adequate credit. Besides arranging training, exposure visits and sensitization programmes for bankers, NABARD conducts studies, tries to identify the bottlenecks and resolve the same. NRLM aims to address the above issues by promoting quality SHGs based on "Panch Sutras" i.e. regular meetings, regular savings, regular internal lending, regular recoveries and maintenance of proper books of accounts. It also provides interest subvention for bank loans up to Rs 3 lakh per SHGs so that the SHGs get institutional credit at an interest rate of 7% p.a. Further interest subvention of 3% p.a. is granted under NRLM for prompt repayment by SHGs in 150 priority districts. To enhance credit flow from the banking sector to the SHGs, NABARD provides 100% refinance to banks towards their lending to SHGs."

1.64 During the Committee's study tour to Mangalore, the Committee were also informed that some of the Regional Rural Banks are not freely lending to SHGs formed under Streeshakthi Scheme in Karnataka.

(iii) Issues faced in credit linkage development

1.65 Total number of SHGs having saving linked during 2014-15 and 2015-16 and the amount of savings are as follows:

As on 31 March 2015		As on 31 March 2016	
No. of SHGs Saving linked	Amount (Rs. crore)	No. of SHGs Saving linked	Amount (Rs. crore)
7697469	11059.84	7903002	13691.39

1.66 The southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala and UTs of Puducherry and Lakshadweep account for more than 35 lakh SHGs out of 79 lakh SHGs savings linked, so far. Resource poor states like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar etc. account for more than 42% of the estimated potential for formation of SHGs but account for only 18% of the SHGs formed. The estimated potential for formation of SHGs in resource poor States is as follows:

Sl. No.	State	Potential for SHG formation
1	Assam	28514
2	Bihar	712769
3	Chhattisgarh	167854
4	Gujarat	163242
5	Himachal Pradesh	10736
6	Jharkhand	203705
7	Madhya Pradesh	493706
8	Maharashtra	4945
9	Odisha	130910
10	Rajasthan	329795
11	Uttar Pradesh	1071344
12	Uttarakhand	25042
13	West Bengal	227067
	Grant Total	3569629

1.67 When the Committee wished to know about the hurdles faced in credit linkage development in Northern India, the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) stated as follows during the oral evidence:

"Once the SHG starts meeting regularly and starts saving, we have a system that if they do that for three months, we provide them a revolving fund of Rs.10,000-Rs.15,000/- Thereafter, the group of SHGs creates a village organization. Then, we provide them community investment fund which again comes to about rupees two or two-and-a-half lakh for a village organization. After doing this and after a series of regular meetings of the women's groups, we prepare a plan. Suppose they would like to do a particular activity for which credit is needed. We prepare something called Micro Credit Plan for that SHG and the members of that Committee as also individuals. We pose these plans to commercial banks for lending. The challenge which we are facing is this. When you look at the statistics of the RBI, what is happening is that financing for SHG groups by commercial banks over the years is coming down and financing of micro finance institutions is going up. What it means is that banks are more comfortable in financing a Micro Finance Institution rather than financing an SHG because when they finance a Micro Finance Institution, they have to deal with one entity which, in turn, then does lending. But then the rates are very high there. For the bank linkage that we offer as part of the credit linkage, to systematise the process and to make it easier, we also went for an arrangement called bank *saki* under the programme. It facilitates credit lending at the bank level. But, in spite of it, we have been constantly taking it up with the Department of Financial Services also. Now, we have SHG-wise, block-wise and district-wise data. They are our SHG groups which have got the revolving fund, which have got community investment fund and which have a concrete plan for credit linkage. For them, we are trying to facilitate lending. But there are some challenges here. As I said, many a time the bank branches are more comfortable in lending through an MFI when they do not have to monitor the repayments on a daily basis. The SHG repayments have been quite good in most States. We are hoping that bank lending will increase. That is our major challenge."

(iv) Regulation of Micro Finance Institutions

1.68 A microfinance institution (MFI) is an organization, private, public or both, that supplies financial services to low-income clients, including consumers and self-employed, who traditionally lack access to traditional banking and related services.

NGOs, credit unions, cooperatives, private commercial banks, non-bank financial institutions and parts of state-owned banks come under the ambit of the term MFIs. During the 1970s and 1980s, the microenterprise movement led to the emergence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) providing small loans for the impoverished. In the 1990s, a number of these institutions transformed themselves into formal financial regulated institutions.

1.69 The Committee, having observed that instances of multiple financing, exorbitant rate of interest and coercive recovery by Micro Finance Institutions (MFI) are on the rise in the microfinance sector, wished to know about the steps taken by the Government to address these issues. In response, the Ministry of Finance (DFS) submitted as under:

"The microfinance sector in India is presently not governed by any regulation. A Sub-Committee of the Central Board of the Reserve Bank (Chairman: Shri Y. H. Malegam) was constituted to study issues and concerns in the MFI sector. The Committee submitted its report in January 2011. In the Monetary Policy Statement 2011-12, it was announced that the broad framework of regulations recommended by the Committee has been accepted by RBI. Accordingly, a separate category of NBFCs viz. Non-Banking Financial Company-Micro Finance Institution (NBFC-MFI) was formed and separate directions were issued vide Notification DNBS.PD.No.234 CGM(US)2011 dated December 02, 2011 containing the regulatory framework for NBFC-MFIs."

1.70 Elucidating further on this aspect, Secretary, M/o. Finance (DFS) submitted during the oral evidence as under:

"Regarding the question on regulations for micro-financing institutions, as of now there is a regulation in place by RBI for those micro-finance institutions which are registered as non-banking finance companies. So, this is a category called NBFCMFI category. There are about 52 such registered entities in the country which are regulated by the RBI. RBI has got specific code of conduct, rules and regulations made for this kind of category of institution. The RBI officially allows them to charge interest up to 25-26 per cent depending on their base rate of cost of borrowing. This is already in place. Some of the senior Members of

Parliament present here may be aware that an attempt was made in the year 2007-08 to introduce Micro-finance Bill in the Parliament. That had lapsed. Another attempt was made in 2012 to again introduce the Micro-finance Bill which has also not seen the light of the day.

Now, there has been an announcement of MUDRA, Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency. Right now MUDRA is only an agency. It is only an NBFC right now. It is not a bank but MUDRA will convert into a bank through an Act of Parliament which we would be bringing eventually on the floor of the Parliament. As and when the draft is ready we will go to the Parliament for making MUDRA into a bank. Along with the MUDRA bank we would also be putting in place some mechanism for regulatory environment for micro-finance institutions in the country. So, this is our plan as of now."

1.71 When the Committee wished to know about the details of credit flow from banks and MFIs to SHGs, the Ministry of Rural Development (DRD) submitted in a written reply as under:

"The recent trend in the amount of credit flow by MFIs has risen from Rs. 37,599 Cr in 2014-15 to Rs. 61,860 Cr in 2015-16. This shows an increase of 65% year-on-year from financial year 2014-15 to financial year 2015-16. However credit disbursement by banks to SHGs has increased from Rs 27582.31 crore during 2014-15 to Rs. 37286.9 crore during 2015-16. This is just an increase of 35.18% from financial year 2014-15 to financial year 2015-16."

(v) Measures to address misutilization of bank credit

1.72 When the Committee desired to know about the measures taken to tackle misutilization of bank credit and default in loan repayment by SHGs, the Ministry of Finance (DFS) submitted as under:

"Individual Banks undertake appropriate actions as per their credit policy in case of misutilisation / default of loan extended to SHGs. However, in order to address the issue of misutilisation of bank credit and default in bank loan, there is increased focus on demand side through adequate capacity building initiatives and increased bank interface. NABARD supports training and capacity building of

bankers, NGOs, government agencies, SHG members and trainers. Cumulatively, around 31.95 lakh participants have been imparted training as on 31 March 2014." Later, the Committee have been informed by the Ministry that the number of participants as on 31 March, 2016 is 35.94 lakh.

(vi) Interest rate of SHGs

1.73 With regard to the interest rate available to SHGs, the Ministry of Rural Development submitted as under:

".... I would like to inform the hon'ble members that Self Help Groups all over the country are charged interest at the rate of 7 per cent instead of 10.5 per cent but there are 150 such districts where an extra incentive of 3 per cent is given if they repay their loans in time. I am happy to inform you that Hon'ble Minister of Finance had announced in his last budget speech to increase the number of such districts by hundred. It is still under process and we will soon get approval in this regard. Soon, there will be 250 districts where we will be able to offer additional 3 per cent interest subvention on timely repayment of loan."

(vii) Digitisation of SHGs

1.74 At present, the quality assessment and monitoring of SHGs are not done on a digitised platform. Taking into account the necessity of putting such an infrastructure in place, NABARD has launched a pilot project titled 'EShakti' for digitisation of all SHGs in select districts. Ramgarh (Jharkhand) and Dhule (Maharashtra) have been identified for this project in phase I. The stakeholders in this project are rural poor community and members of SHGs, Self Help Promoting Institutions(SHPs), NGOs, Banks, NABARD, Government Agencies like SLRMs, NRLM etc.

F. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)

1.75 Based on the recommendations made by the National Commission for Self-employed Women in the informal sector, the Government of India set up 'Rashtriya Mahila Kosh' in 1993 as an autonomous body under the aegis of the Ministry of Women and Child Development for the socio-economic empowerment of poor women. RMK

provides micro-credit to women SHGs and Joint Liability Groups(JLGs) including women micro-entrepreneurs in both rural and urban areas. The rate of interest of RMK is 6 per cent. To evaluate the performance of the Kosh on the living conditions of women beneficiaries, an evaluation study was conducted by an independent organization during 2012-13. The findings of the study revealed positive effects in the lives of the women beneficiaries including enhanced savings and personal capacities. A statement showing State-wise SHGs formed under RMK since inception till 31.03.2016 is given in **Annexure IV**.

1.76 The operating model currently followed by RMK is that of a facilitating agency wherein RMK provides loans to NGOs-MFIs termed as Intermediary Organizations (IMO) which on-lend to Self Help Groups (SHGs) of women. In addition, RMK also has appointed nodal agencies and franchisees for furthering of its objectives of reaching out to the women beneficiaries with easy access of micro credit for income generating activities. RMK extends micro-credit to the women in the informal sector through a client friendly, without collateral and in a hassle-free manner for income generation activities. RMK has taken a number of promotional measures to popularize the concept of micro financing, enterprise development, thrift and credit, formation and strengthening of Women-SHG through intermediary organizations.

1.77 The Committee have been informed that with a view to restructure and revamp RMK, A committee was constituted on 05.08.2014. The Governing Board (GB) of RMK in its 52nd GB meet held on 03/12/2014 discussed the report of the said committee and adopted the suggestions / decisions for revamping of RMK. In line with decision of Governing Board, the aims and objectives of the proposed scheme/ RMK are as follows:

- i. Socio-economic empowerment
- ii. Capacity building of IMO's
- iii. Capacity building of women beneficiaries

1.78 The Committee having observed that around 400 NGOs have defaulted and Government money was not properly utilized under RMK, wished to know about the measures taken by the Ministry to recover the outstanding dues. In response, the following written reply was furnished by the Ministry:

"RMK like banks is a lending institution. However, unlike banks, RMK's loans are both collateral free and third party guarantee free and also available at vary nominal rate of 6%. RMK being a single window agency with a sole office in Delhi caters to the needs of borrowers all over the Country. In this scenario, the requisite follow up and monitoring of the loans gets affected. As a result over the past of 22 years of the operations against cumulative disbursement of Rs. 300 crores RMK has incurred a cumulative default of Rs. 35 crore spanning more than 400 NGOs. Towards recovery of our default amount we are simultaneously taking various means of recovery viz. Suit Filing, complaints under section 138 of NIA, Blacklisting the NGOs etc. Recently we have also launched One Time Settlement (OTS) / Out of Court Settlement (OCS) schemes."

PART II

OBSERVATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

Successful coverage of NRLM in States/UTs

2.1 The Committee note that National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) has been designed from the learnings amalgamated from various poverty eradication programmes including Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). NRLM has set off with an agenda to reach out to all rural poor households by the year 2024-25 through a phased implementation strategy. Even though, the Mission was launched in June, 2011, the subsequent years till 2014 were transition years for the States and as of August, 2016, all States except Goa and the Union Territory of Puducherry have transited to NRLM. Despite the hiccups in the initial years, NRLM has now gathered steam and the number of functional SHGs under NRLM has risen from 17,44,189, to 28,78,004 during the period from February 2015 to August, 2016. While taking note of this praiseworthy progress, the Committee, nonetheless wish, to caution the Ministry to exercise utmost care that NRLM does not encounter the same drawbacks and stumble on pitfalls that befell on SGSY programme. In fact, the Committee in their 18th Report on 'Functioning of Self Help Groups for Economic Empowerment of Women' had put forth various recommendations for the successful implementation of SGSY and had hoped that this ambitious project of the Government would bring in palpable changes in the lives of the poor. Later, it was quite disheartening for the Committee to see the failure of this programme. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Ministry should attend to every micro and macro detail required for the growth and success of NRLM in a time bound manner without slackening their pace of coverage across the country including the State of Goa and UT of Puducherry and take concerted efforts to help NRLM realise its cherished dream of

eradication of poverty and financial inclusion of the poor and marginalised sections of the society, especially women, within the target period of 2024-25 with unified planning, proper monitoring and expert guidance.

Role of State Governments in the success of SHGs

2.2 The Committee note that at State level, State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM) constituted by States oversees the implementation of all NRLM related activities. The three level units of SRLM viz., State Mission Management Unit (SMMU), District Mission Management Unit (DMMU) and Block Mission Management Unit (BMMU) spearhead the implementation process of the Mission in a State. The Committee observe from the success stories of 'Kudumbashree' in Kerala and the SHGs in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka that the pro active role played by State Governments contribute substantially to the success of SHGs in a State. Hence, as the State Governments have an overarching role to play in framing conducive financial and economic policies which can help Micro Finance Institutions and rural development, the Committee strongly recommend that NRLM should work in tandem with the State Governments, holding consultation with the States and guiding them whenever necessary to fulfil this ambitious project of the Government.

Uneven spread of SHGs in the country

2.3 During the last decade, the country has recorded a tremendous growth of SHGs. The total number of functional SHGs under NRLM has increased from 17,44,189 to 28,78,004 during the period from 2015 to 2016. The State of Andhra Pradesh account for the largest number of functional SHGs under NRLM in the country (23.25%), followed by Bihar (17.87%), Telangana (14.71%) and Kerala (9.24%).

Alongwith Bihar, various States like Gujarat, West Bengal, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka have shown marked improvement in the growth of SHGs in the last one year. Similarly, many other States, as is evident from Annexure I, are picking up pace in the formation of SHGs. However, while States like Manipur and Tripura have increased their SHG tallies from 0 to 424 and 529 respectively, Arunachal Pradesh is yet to have a SHG in the State. This shows the regional inequalities in the spread of SHGs in the country. As the Committee firmly believe that SHGs substantially contribute towards the empowerment of women in rural areas and ensure their equality of status as participants, decision-makers and beneficiaries in the democratic, economic and social spheres of life, they strongly recommend that this uneven spread of SHGs may be attended to by bringing on board those States which have not yet instituted the implementing mechanism under the ambit of NRLM at the earliest. However, the Committee would also like to impress upon the Ministry to ensure that SHGs are not formed across the country merely for the sake of increasing their number and only to become defunct after two or three years but that they are formed after doing proper ground work and that they function in an efficient manner too.

Focussed attention on SHGs in North Eastern States

2.4 In continuation of the observations proffered in the preceding paragraph, the Committee would like to emphasise that the North East region merits special attention of the Government in the formation of SHGs. The Committee note that out of the eight North Eastern States viz., Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura and Mizoram, all the States except Arunachal Pradesh have functional SHGs under NRLM, with Assam being in the forefront. Arunachal Pradesh is yet to set up an implementation machinery. The Committee also note that

North East is a financially excluded region in the country owing to difficult terrain and socio cultural climate. There is a lack of adequate bank branches too in this region. The Committee feel that this situation is neither conducive for the financial inclusion nor for the growth of SHGs in the region. Though, the North Eastern States have taken significant strides in the formation of SHGs in the recent years, the Committee feel that focussed efforts are necessary to increase the number of qualitatively sound SHGs in the region. Here, the Committee would like to point out one positive aspect of the region is that literacy rate in North East is higher than the national average and this factor could leverage Government's efforts to augment SHG coverage of the region. Hence, the Committee urge the Ministry to make optimum use of the positive aspects of the region, chart out a road map to tackle the geographical and socio-cultural issues related to the area, do careful human resource planning, provide adequate training, create a common platform for all stakeholders including NABARD and other MFIs to address various issues related to SHGs and work in close coordination with the State Governments to take synergetic efforts in accelerating the progress to bring the North Eastern states under the domain of financial inclusion through formation of SHGs.

Formation of SHGs in remote areas and tribal areas

2.5 The Committee note that the Ministry has assured that under NRLM, districts and blocks for implementation of the programme are selected in an objective manner, keeping in view the poverty criterion based on the Human Development Indices. The Committee are happy with this implementation strategy of the Ministry and hope that this approach of SHG formation will help remote villages, dispersed habitations and poor households get inevitably covered under NRLM. However, the Committee feel that formation of SHGs in tribal areas deserve special attention of the Government.

As the demands and capacity of the tribal areas are different from rural and suburban areas, they need a customized strategy in harmony with their socio-economic conditions, culture, capacity and natural resources. Special efforts will also be required to increase their awareness, to motivate them and improve their skills and knowledge. Several bottlenecks such as lack of literacy, financial management, discipline as a group, marketing of the products etc. need to be tackled in a special way. Their leisurely pace of life and culture may also stand in the way of any rapid change for their socio-economic development and women empowerment. As poverty and absence of women empowerment are two major hurdles plaguing the tribal community hindering their social and economical development, the Committee recommend that special attention may be given to the tribal areas with a tailor made approach catering to their specific needs and capacities so that financial inclusion of the remote areas and economic and social empowerment of the tribal women are achieved at a faster pace. The Committee would like to be apprised about the progress achieved in this regard.

Incentives and Awards to SHG Federations

2.6 The Committee observe that SHG Federations play an important role in the growth of SHGs. These structures of cluster- (village) level, block- (sub-district) level and district-level federations aim to provide support services to their member SHGs and SHG members respectively. They act as an interface between SHGs and mainstream institutions. They can be a participatory platform for the SHGs to share their experiences, voice their concerns and find collective solutions. The Committee are of the view that what the individual SHGs could not achieve, can be achieved by the Federations by pooling their collective skills and resources. They can also guide

and monitor the functioning of SHGs and also form and train new SHGs. The Committee understand that so far 21,98,604 SHGs have been federated into Village Organizations. Keeping in view the importance of the SHG Federations, the Committee recommend that the Ministry may consider providing incentives or awards to each successfully graded Federation to motivate them to render better performance. The interest accrued from the incentive fund may be used by them for administrative purposes or to take up some social welfare activities.

Literacy among SHG members

2.7 The Committee observe that in all the States where SHGs are doing well, the literacy rate amongst its women members is high. As education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process, the Committee feel that women SHG members who are illiterate should be encouraged to learn to read and write which, in turn, can aid them in capacity building, especially accounting, financial management and organizational development. The Committee, therefore, suggest that in order to motivate the rural women SHG members, the Ministry may think in the direction of instituting cash award for those SHGs who have 100% literate SHG members. However, the Committee would like to put in a word of caution that this should never set the wrong practice of SHGs insisting that only literate women can join a SHG. The Committee also suggest that awards may also be instituted for honouring those SHGs which fight against social injustice and violence perpetrated against women so that alongwith economic empowerment, women SHG members become torchbearers in creating a better social environment.

Capacity Building and Skill Development of SHG Members

2.8 The Committee observe that various training modules have been developed under NRLM to impart training for the capacity building of women SHG members with regard to SHG concepts, management, leadership, micro credit plan, Village Organization concepts, participatory identification of poor (PIP), gender and women empowerment, book keeping etc. However, the Committee feel that all the members in a SHG may not have the same caliber and expertise and there is a need to pay special attention to them. Hence, the Committee recommend that such members in every SHG may be identified and a special training programme may be designed to make them competent so that they can give optimum contribution to the development of the SHGs. Further, under skill development, the training given to the SHGs in the specific areas of product selection, quality of products, production techniques, managerial ability, packaging, labelling, other technical knowledge etc. should be up to the mark so that these SHGs can compete with stronger units or other companies in the market and the quality of SHG products and productivity of SHGs are not compromised.

Increasing the awareness of SHG Members

2.9 The Committee are informed that adequate measures are taken to create awareness among SHG members about the functioning of SHGs and various schemes that are beneficial to them. However, many times majority of the groups remain unaware of the schemes offered to them either due to lack of literacy or lack of holistic involvement. As the rural women are considered to be the pivot to strengthen the efforts to end rural poverty, raising their level of awareness about

their occupational field and other socio-cultural issues is highly imperative for their economic as well as social well being. The Committee, therefore, recommend that frequent awareness camps may be organised by the SRLM to create awareness among the SHG members about the functioning of SHGs, different schemes of assistance available to the participants in the SHGs, availability of raw materials, importance of branding, advertising and its impact on the sale of the products, general social issues and so on. In order to motivate the members, SHG members who have raised their voice against social issues or created successful business ventures can also be roped in to these awareness camps to give inspirational talks.

Production Related Issues: Availability of raw materials

2.10 During the study tours, the Committee have been informed that non availability of raw materials at a cheaper cost is a major problem faced by SHGs. It has been observed that many SHGs procure raw materials individually from the suppliers in smaller quantities and hence they are not able to enjoy the benefits of large scale purchases like discount, credit facilities etc. Moreover, there is no systematic arrangement made by SHGs to purchase raw materials in bulk quantities and preserve them properly. SHGs also lack linkage with major suppliers of raw materials and they are ignorant about the major raw material suppliers and their terms and conditions. All these result in SHG members purchasing raw materials at a higher rate. Hence, the Committee feel that there is a dire need to educate and train the SHG members about locally available raw materials and their diverse uses. The Committee, therefore, desire that information about locally available raw material and their varied uses should be disseminated to SHGs so that they can tap locally

available raw material to its fullest potential and produce innovative products at a competitive rate.

Quality, innovative designs, proper branding and packaging of SHG products

2.11 The Committee note that SHG members create a large number of products, some of which compete with branded or established products in terms of quality. However, it has been observed that in the consumer market, the quality of a product is often linked to brand name and attractive packaging. Therefore, even if the quality of SHG products is at par with the products of large manufacturing concerns, the SHG products lack lustre in the eyes of the consumer due to unattractive packaging and the buyer hesitates to buy such products. Hence, it is highly imperative that not only the quality of the product but the finishing and packaging also must be made attractive and at par with that of the big company products. Moreover, lack of variety and repetition of designs in products like bags, garments etc make the consumers shy away from SHG products. The Committee understand that the Ministry of Finance is in constant touch with design agencies like National Institute of Design and State level design institutes and are trying to link those with the SHGs. As the consumers of today seek quality and variety in products, the Committee are of the view that SHG products can make an impact in the market if the group members are committed towards quality, diversity in designs and hygiene and, hence, recommend that Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Rural development should take all necessary efforts in this direction.

Creation of avenues for marketing

2.12 A major problem faced by SHGs is lack of regular or permanent markets to sell their products. Presently, many States have provided permanent marketing complexes for the SHGs, and options like e-commerce, e-portal etc. are also being explored by various SHGs. Exhibition cum sales are organized for the SHGs in village haats and on special occasions. Many SHGs even venture out of their own States and participate in trade fairs conducted in other States. Nevertheless, successful and profitable marketing of SHG products is a major issue with SHGs. Hence, the Committee recommend that suitable interventions may be made by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Rural Development in the area of educating and training the SHGs in addressing the marketing issues related to shortage of sufficient orders, lack of linkage with marketing agencies, inadequate sales promotion measures or advertisements about SHG products, dearth of sustainable markets, absence of a proper brand name, unattractive and low quality packaging of the products, poor quality of products due to the application of traditional technology, stiff competition from other players, lack of a well defined and well knit channel of distribution for marketing etc. Though marketing strategies may differ depending on the unique situation of the individual business, some generic strategies can be categorized for the help of the SHGs. The Ministries may also impress upon the State governments concerned to take suitable steps for extending marketing support to the SHGs. The Committee note that NABARD has stated that there is a need to build a data bank with regard to the availability of quantum and quality of SHG products available on pan-India basis to make the sale of SHG products through e-portal a success. The Committee hope that NABARD will take pro-active steps in this direction and e-marketing of SHG products will be given due attention and priority.

Unity among members in Women SHGs

2.13 The Committee *inter alia* observe that one major factor contributing to the success of a SHG is the unity amongst its members. The Committee have been informed that the interpersonal differences in SHGs are usually discussed during the meetings of SHGs and solutions are arrived at. While appreciating this, the Committee suggest that the SHG members may be made aware of the importance of unity among its members as lack of unity among women members owing to personal reasons can shake the very foundation of a SHG . It is also suggested that measures should be taken to avoid instances of strong members in the group earning a lion's share of the profit by exploiting the ignorant and illiterate members in the group.

Income generating activities

2.14 The Committee have been apprised that SHGs are involved in various kinds of income producing activities like agarbatti making, pickle making, sericulture, bag making, candle making etc. During the Committee's study tour, the Committee observed that Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW) has been promoting women SHGs in starting small scale catering businesses and running canteens. Hundreds of canteens run by women have come up in the offices of district collectors and block development officers in Tamil Nadu. The Committee feel that this is a very promising sector for women and suggest that the possibilities of this sector should be fully exploited, wherever feasible, as hygienic and quality food is very much in demand across the country. The Committee also note that in a

SHG group now it is possible for members to take up individual activity for income generation instead of engaging in group activities. The Committee appreciate this power of choice given to individual members for income generation but at the same time hope that as the group is collectively responsible for the repayment of the loan obtained, the members who engage in individual livelihood activity are made well aware of their responsibility as a group member so that problems related to repayment of loan does not crop up.

Monitoring of SHGs

2.15 The Committee observe that a vigilant and effective monitoring system holds the key to the success of any project. Effective monitoring can bring into light the capacity building and awareness needs of SHGs and will help in providing timely clarifications and assistance for the growth of SHGs. The Committee understand that the Government has put in place real time reports to monitor the functioning of SHGs on a monthly frequency. There are Management Information System (MIS) available for SHG level transactions managed at the State level or project level. Several State Rural Livelihood Missions and NGOs have their own MIS to monitor the functioning of SHGs. As a robust monitoring mechanism can regularly keep a tab on prevailing impediments and offer timely remedial measures, the Committee would like to urge the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Finance to periodically assess the effectualness of the existing monitoring mechanism and ceaselessly keep on devising novel and more scientific ways to make it even more functional as per the changing needs and objective realities of time. The Committee also suggest that all the State governments concerned may be urged to develop their own effective monitoring mechanism to carry out periodical monitoring of SHGs so that any issues

affecting the growth of the SHGs can be nipped in the bud and the SHG movement is turned into a success saga in the country.

Adequacy of well trained staff

2.16 The Committee observe that NRLM has set up dedicated and sensitive support units at the National, State, District and Sub-district levels, to catalyze social mobilization, build institutions, capacities and skills, facilitate financial inclusion and access to financial services, support livelihoods and to promote convergence and partnerships with various programmes and stakeholders. The Ministry of Rural Development has stated that these units would be staffed with professionally competent and dedicated human resources. The Committee are happy with this measure and hope that the Ministry will make optimum use of the manpower available with them for the vigorous growth of SHGs. However, the Committee observe that at State level the State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLM), constituted by State Governments, oversee the implementation of all NRLM related activities in the state. As SRLM is playing a major role in the formation and growth of SHGs in a State, it is a pre-requisite that SRLM is equipped with adequate and well trained officials. The Committee, therefore, desire that all the States concerned may be exhorted to deploy sufficient, well trained qualified and dedicated human resources under SRLM who can motivate and guide SHG members, and ensure effective and timely implementation of the projects and provide handholding services to the SHGs in their initial years to help them stand on good stead and become a success.

Role and Monitoring of NGOs

2.17 The Committee note that NGOs have been the path breakers in the formation and growth of SHGs in the country starting with MYRADA in the State of Karnataka. The path blazed by the pioneer NGOs was trod upon by NGOs in other States to make the economic empowerment of women through SHGs a reality. Several NGOs have played a commendable role in promoting SHGs and linking them with banks. The Committee note that SRLM also partner with NGOs in terms of mobilization, institution building and capacity building. However, the Committee observe that no database of NGOs working with SHGs are available with the NRLM division. The Committee feel that as NGOs can work as a catalyst in the successful formation and growth of SHGs, a database relating to NGOs connected with SHGs will not only facilitate the government agencies to draw up a unified strategy to monitor the work of NGOs but also provide adequate handholding services to the NGOs too, be it in the form of training and capacity building of NGOs or providing them with incentive packages or hassle-free grants wherever and whenever necessary. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Government to take the desired steps in this direction and apprise the Committee accordingly.

Convergence of SHG with other schemes

2.18 The Committee have been informed that there is a need to converge SHG-BLP with NRLM and other State sponsored programmes. It has been perceived that convergence of programmes will lead to better use of available resources, improve the quality of services, sustainable handholding services and also significantly lower the cost of services being extended to the rural poor. The Ministry has informed that

as per the implementation framework of NRLM, convergence with MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) is an integral part of the programme and State Governments have been advised to promote convergence between SHGs and MGNREGA programme. The Committee too unequivocally agree that convergence will bring in synergies between different government programmes in terms of planning, process and implementation which, in turn, will facilitate sustainable development and create durable assets in the rural area. The Committee, therefore urge upon the Government to draw an action plan in coordination with the State governments for the convergence of SHGs with other State sponsored programmes at the earliest with a well laid out roadmap. The Committee also recommend that the glitches standing in the way of fructifying the convergence may be sorted out in consultation with all the stakeholders concerned at the earliest. The Committee would like to be kept abreast of the developments in this regard.

Political Empowerment of Women SHGs

2.19 The Committee note that with the advent of SHGs, women across the country have been slowly but steadily climbing the ladder of socio-economic development in the rural areas. SHGs have not only produced tangible assets and improved the living conditions of the rural women but have also helped in honing their leadership skills and changing much of their social outlook and attitudes thereby ensuring their socio-economic development. However, it is to be noted that political empowerment of rural women, which is yet another objective of the formation of SHGs, has not been achieved to the desired level till date. Political empowerment of women through SHGs is negligible across the country, barring a few examples of SHGs holding sway over Panchayat elections in States like Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Despite

having 33 per cent of reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and urban local bodies in all States, women are yet to make their strong presence felt in this field. Since, women empowerment is impossible in the absence of their representatives in decision making bodies, the Committee suggest that the Ministry should take adequate measures to motivate SHG members to participate in political processes on equal footing with their male counterparts so that the political empowerment of women through SHGs becomes a reality in near future.

Swachh Bharat Mission and Women SHGs

2.20 The Committee are happy to see that women SHG members along with NGOs and other organizations are playing a pivotal role under Swachh Bharat Mission to make villages free of open defecation. As per the Swachhta Status Report in 2015, more than 50% of the rural population defecate in open and it is one of the biggest challenges before the country. The SHGs, in fact, long before associating themselves with the Swachh Bharat Mission, have been agents of cleanliness and hygiene as they used to undertake hygienic waste disposal projects. As NRLM is being implemented across the country through a huge network of SHGs, they can effectively generate awareness in the society and bring about positive behavioural changes in people. However, as SHG members are engaged in pursuing their economic activities along with managing their household duties, they need spare time as well as adequate training to shoulder this onerous task. Hence, the Committee desire that the requirements of SHG members in this mission, be it in the form of capacity building or finance, may be addressed by the Ministries concerned so that SHG members can be fired up with energy and passion to work for this cause.

The Committee would also like to suggest that while working for Swachh Bharat campaign, *inter alia*, SHG members may generate awareness amongst rural womenfolk about safe menstrual hygiene practices and hygienic disposal of sanitary pads too. The Committee appreciate the country's rural women for their energy, courage and commitment towards making a clean India and look forward to their efforts bearing fruits within the target period of 2019.

Mahila Kisan Sashakthikaran Pariyojana

2.21 The Committee find that to improve the present status of women in Agriculture, and to enhance the opportunities for their empowerment, 'Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana' (MKSP) is being run as a sub component of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) in which about 2 million rural women engaged in agriculture are being targeted to be empowered through multiple interventions. The funding to the tune of 75% (90% for North Eastern States) for the project is provided by the Ministry of Rural Development in accordance with the projects submitted by the State Governments under MKSP. Along with other organizations, SHGs can also submit proposals under MKSP. The Committee note that MKSP is one of the first programmes of the Government that recognizes women farmers as the primary stakeholder. If farming is established as a profitable and sustainable livelihood, it will not only ensure food security for the nation and empowerment of women farmers but will also reduce distress migration of farmer families. As MKSP does not make formal ownership of land the basis for working with women farmers, the programme is in a privileged position to rise to the agricultural demands of the country and making substantive equality of women its ultimate goal. Hence, the Committee desire that more and more SHGs may be encouraged to resort to agriculture as a means of

economic empowerment. The best practices adopted in agriculture by successful SHGs like 'Kudumbashree', 'Indira Kranthi Patham', 'Tejaswani' etc. can be emulated by other SHGs under MKSP. The Committee hope that the involvement of SHG women farmers, among other inputs, will play a very critical role in terms of traditional skills, technical know-how, rural penetration and linkages with locally existing markets in heralding a national agricultural revival and ushering in the second green revolution.

Community Resource Persons and Auditing of SHGs

2.22 The Committee observe that instead of solely relying on NGOs or on Governments, NRLM is relying on the women who have worked long with SHGs to work as Community Resource Persons (CRPs) to help in social mobilisation and institution building. These CRPs have long experience as members of SHGs and have used SHGs as a strong tool to come out of poverty. As CRPs play a dynamic role in nurturing SHGs, the Committee desire that no efforts should be spared in providing intensive training for the capacity building of CRPs so that formation, development and capacity building of SHGs do not suffer. The Committee further note that the SHGs are required to do annual auditing of SHGs bearing the expense for the same from their own fund, but this has not become a practice among many SHGs. The Committee find this quite inappropriate as auditing is an important tool that helps to understand the quality of SHGs in relation to their financial statements, reveals the income and expenditure patterns, surplus and loss in their business as well as the reasons and issues related to them and therefore, recommend that SHGs should be advised to adopt annual auditing as a regular practice so that the financial

deficiencies in the functioning of SHGs can be addressed and resolved effectively on time.

Impact evaluation of NRLM

2.23 The Committee find that the intensive implementation of the Mission in a phased manner had started in most states during the financial year 2012-13 and had gathered momentum during 2013-14. The Committee further note that all states are now required to undertake impact evaluation studies, starting with the baseline study. So far, 13 states have conducted livelihoods assessment study, 8 states have submitted their final report and reports from 5 states are awaited. Further, for conducting impact evaluation of NRLM, a study has been commissioned, to be conducted by the Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand, Gujarat. It is expected that the study will be completed by the end of December, 2016 and the report is expected to be submitted during January-February, 2017. The Committee firmly believe that periodical impact evaluation of any project is of high importance as it helps in identifying the strengths, shortcomings and difficulties involved in the project and initiating timely interventions and corrective measures wherever necessary for the success of the programme. The Committee appreciate this measure taken by the Ministry to commission an impact assessment study at the initial stage of NRLM and desire that the Committee be kept abreast of the findings of the study.

Issues faced by SHGs in availing loans

2.24 During the study tour, the Committee have been informed that one of the major problems faced by the SHG members with regard to micro credit is delay in obtaining loans from the banks. The Committee have also been informed that some of the Regional Rural Banks show reluctance in lending to SHGs and even SHGs with good credit history do not receive adequate credit. The Committee feel perturbed with such feedbacks from the SHG members and apprehend that if the current state of affairs are not handled properly by the Ministry of Finance, the woes of SHGs with regard to obtaining loans from banks, be it the delay in financing or repeat financing or the non-cooperative attitude of the banks, will continue to plague the SHGs and adversely affect their growth. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the extant training programmes, exposure visits and sensitizations programmes for bankers to address the issues related to financing of SHGs may be modified or advanced in accordance with the realistic demand and issue necessary guidelines to bring about attitudinal changes in the bank officials towards SHGs.

Regulation of Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs)

2.25 The Committee have observed that many SHGs have been availing loans from various MFIs and credit flow from MFIs have risen from 37,599 crore in 2014-15 to Rs.61,860 crore in 2015-16. Though this shows the growing impact of MFIs on the economic growth of the country, the disappointing factor is that these MFIs are not governed by any regulation as of now. The Micro Finance Institutions (Development and Regulation) Bill which was introduced in 2012 has failed to see the light of the

day. As MFIs serve a particularly vulnerable section of the society who lack financial literacy, individual bargaining power and are less equipped to absorb external shocks, the Committee feel that stringent regulatory measures need to be put in place to address the issues in this realm. The Committee also feel that cases of suicide of the large number of micro finance borrowers reported in Andhra Pradesh in 2010 due to multiple credit lending, exorbitant rate of interest and coercive recovery methods would not have had happened if a strong regulatory mechanism had been in place. Hence, considering the proliferation of MFIs in the country and the vulnerable sections of the society that is exposed to it, the Committee, strongly urge the Ministry of Finance to take suitable measures to put in place an effective regulatory mechanism for MFIs which will address all the core issues in the micro finance sector. The Committee would like to be apprised of the steps taken in this regard.

Digitisation of SHGs

2.26 The Committee observe that NABARD's project EShakti aims to bring SHG members under the fold of Financial Inclusion whereby they can access wider range of financial services and bankers can easily appraise and keep a track of the SHGs that are credit linked. A plethora of benefits are perceived under EShakti including improved quality of book-keeping which is a very important tool for the successful functioning of an SHG , reducing saving-credit linkage gap, tracking credit history of members, transparency through real time SMS alerts to members on updation and convergence of SHG with other Government programmes etc. Under NABARD's pilot project for digitisation of all SHGs, 10 districts across 10 states of the country are

proposed to be covered. The pilot started by NABARD in 2014-15 is to be executed over a period of 2 years and is expected to cover 75,000 SHGs touching the lives of over 11 lakh rural households. The Committee appreciate this thoughtful step taken by NABARD for ease of doing business in the field of SHGs and hope that digitisation will usher in greater transparency and credibility to operations of SHGs and increase the comfort of bankers in credit appraisal, disbursement and monitoring. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress achieved in this regard.

Interest rate of loans

2.27 The Committee observe that in order to facilitate the entrepreneurial activities of women SHGs, NRLM has a provision for interest subvention in 250 select districts. All NRLM compliant SHGs in the select districts are charged interest on bank loans at the rate of 7 per cent upto an amount of Rs. 3 lakhs and the SHGs will get additional interest subvention of 3% on prompt repayment of loan, thereby reducing the effective rate of interest to 4%. In the remaining districts, NRLM compliant SHGs will get interest subvention to the extent of difference between the lending rates and 7% for loan upto Rs. 3 lakhs, subjective to the norms prescribed by the SRLMs concerned. Earlier 150 select districts used to enjoy this subvention and now additional 100 districts have been added to it thereby increasing the number of districts to 250. The Committee are happy with this addition of 100 more districts under the 3 per cent subvention scheme and hope that this will give a fillip to the SHGs in those regions and will encourage the SHGs in general for prompt repayment of loan. The Committee further note that acknowledging the potential of the SHG products and the sincere efforts of women SHGs in prompt repayment of loan, State

Governments like Maharashtra and Karnataka have announced to provide interest free loan to women SHGs. The Committee appreciate this welcome move from the part of the State Governments and sincerely wish that the government would encourage other States too emulate this positive step to boost the morale of the SHG members.

SHG-Bank Linkage Programme

2.28 The Committee note that Self Help Group- Bank Linkage programme (SHG-BLP) took off with the objective of providing the rural poor with access to formal banking services. The programme was successful to a great extent due to the participation of various banks across the country, untiring efforts by NGOs, federations of SHGs, farmers clubs and individual rural volunteers for promotion, nurturing and credit linkage of SHGs. Moreover, the statistics of the Reserve Bank of India reveal that financing of SHG groups by commercial banks over the years is coming down and financing of micro finance institutions is going up. The Committee also note the concern expressed by the Ministry of Rural Development that the main challenge in this area is that the bank lending need to go up. The Committee feel that the goal of pan-India coverage of poor households for creating livelihood through the mechanism of SHG-BLP requires several interventions including leveraging technology, capacity building of all the stakeholders such as bankers, NGOs, Government agencies, SHG members and trainers and designing of a wide range of deposit and credit products suiting the requirements of the poor. The Committee, therefore, exhort the Ministry of Finance and NABARD to take concerted efforts in this direction and apprise the Committee accordingly. The Committee further desire that with regard to misutilisation of bank credits by SHG members, individual banks

may start a vigilance cell with competent officers to take stock of the activities of SHGs and set the alarm bells ringing in time to prevent misutilisation of bank credit by SHG members.

Rashtriya Mahila Kosh

2.29 The Committee note that Rashtriya Mahila Kosh was set up by the Government in 1993 for the socio-economic empowerment of poor women. RMK provides micro credit to women SHGs and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) including women micro-entrepreneurs in both rural and urban areas through NGOs. The present rate of interest of RMK is 6 per cent. The Ministry of Women and Child Development has stated that the findings of a study conducted by an independent organization in 2012-13 has revealed that RMK has brought in positive effects in the lives of the women beneficiaries . The number of SHGs formed under RMK since inception till 31.03.2016 is 88,229. The Committee further note that to streamline and strengthen the functioning of RMK, a committee was constituted on 05.08.2014 and the Governing Board of RMK in its 52nd GB meet held on 03.12.2014 adopted various suggestions pertaining to the revamping of RMK . The Committee would like to be apprised of the present status of the revamping proposal, the actions taken so far in this regard and the action plan in pipeline to mitigate the shortcomings in RMK. The Committee may also be informed about the measures taken so far to streamline it and the roadmap laid out for the future of RMK for taking the fruits of micro credit to various parts of the country and to make RMK a major venture in terms of efforts in poverty alleviation coupled with cost effectiveness.

NEW DELHI
December, 2016
Agrahayana,1938 (Saka)

BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY,
CHAIRPERSON,
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.

Annexure-I

S.No.	State	Functional SHGs under NRLM as in February 2015	Functional SHGs under NRLM as in August 2016
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	669188	669188
2	ASSAM	54426	72292
3	BIHAR	61108	514535
4	CHHATTISGARH	19267	21459
5	GUJARAT	21008	165408
6	JHARKHAND	16136	36520
7	KARNATAKA	7890	33530
8	KERALA	229110	266053
9	MADHYA PRADESH	37735	129904
10	MAHARASHTRA	26262	53383
11	ODISHA	41198	141016
12	RAJASTHAN	2907	51684
13	TAMIL NADU	69071	152261
14	TELANGANA	423361	423361
15	UTTAR PRADESH	5594	32650
16	WEST BENGAL	42470	82599
17	HARYANA	3014	5914
18	HIMACHAL PRADESH	857	2879
19	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	5757	11026
20	PUNJAB	936	2671
21	UTTARAKHAND	590	2567
22	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	0	0
23	MANIPUR	0	424
24	MEGHALAYA	76	1143
25	MIZORAM	774	928
26	NAGALAND	1702	2461
27	SIKKIM	0	529
28	TRIPURA	3752	1619
29	*Goa		
30	*Pondicherry		
	Total:	1744189	2878004

Annexure-II

State-wise details of the SHG promoted and SHG federation at village and cluster level

Progress up to Aug'16

S.No.	State	SHGs	VOs	CLFs
1	Andhra Pradesh	669188	27310	656
2	Assam	72292	3816	27
3	Bihar	514535	30184	326
4	Chhattisgarh	21459	898	24
5	Gujarat	165408	2399	4
6	Jharkhand	36520	2060	13
7	Karnataka	33530	3642	712
8	Kerala	266053	17328	976
9	Madhya Pradesh	129904	11350	168
10	Maharashtra	53383	2874	97
11	Odisha	141016	10968	1523
12	Rajasthan	51684	2619	59
13	Tamil Nadu	152261	5885	5579
14	Telangana	423361	18105	442
15	Uttar Pradesh	32650	1589	0
16	West Bengal	82599	6289	545
17	Haryana	5914	253	6
18	Himachal Pradesh	2879	68	1
19	Jammu And Kashmir	11026	1048	75
20	Punjab	2671	171	7
21	Uttarakhand	2567	44	1
22	Arunachal Pradesh*	0	0	0
23	Manipur	424	0	0
24	Meghalaya	1143	47	0
25	Mizoram	928	38	0
26	Nagaland	2461	114	0
27	Sikkim	529	0	0
28	Tripura	1619	85	0
29	Goa*			
30	Pondicherry*			
	Total:	2878004	149184	11241

Annexure III

List of 250 eligible Districts for the Interest Subvention on the loan at 7% and additional interest Subvention of 3% on the prompt repayment

<u>Sl No</u>	<u>States</u>	<u>Sl</u>	<u>Name of districts</u>
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	1	Guntur
		2	Krishna
		3	Srikakulam
		4	East Godavari
		5	Vijaynagram
		6	Visakhapatnam
2	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	1	East Siang
		2	East Kameng
		3	Papumpare
		4	Lohit
3	ASSAM	1	Chirang
		2	Karbi Anglong
		3	Sonitpur
		4	Tinsukiya
		5	Hailakandi
		6	Dhemeji
		7	Jorhat
		8	Nagaon
4	BIHAR	1	Saharsa
		2	Supaul
		3	Madhepura
		4	Nalanda

		5	Khagria
		6	EastChamparan (Motihari)
		7	Arwal
		8	Aurangabad
		9	Gaya
		10	Jamui
		11	Jehanabad
		12	Kaimur
		13	Munger
		14	Nawada
		15	Rohtas
		16	Paschim Champaran
		17	Sitamarhi
5	CHATTISGARH	1	Balarampur
		2	Surajpur
		3	Sukama
		4	Kondagaon
		5	Gariyaband
		6	Baloda Bazar
		7	Dhamtari
		8	Raigarh
		9	Bastar
		10	Bijapur
		11	Dantewada
		12	Jashpur
		13	Kanker
		14	Kawardha

		15	Koriya
		16	Narayanpur
		17	Rajnandgaon
		18	Sarguja
6	GUJARAT	1	Chhotaudepur
		2	Mahisagar
		3	Mehsana
		4	Junagadh
		5	Vadodara
		6	Banaskantha
		7	Panchmahal
7	JHARKHAND	1	Pakkur
		2	Dumka
		3	Godda
		4	Bokarao
		5	Chatra
		6	Garhwa
		7	Giridh
		8	Gumla
		9	Hazaribagh
		10	Khunti
		11	Kodarma
		12	Latehar(N)
		13	Lohardaga
		14	Paschim Singhbhum
		15	Palamu
		16	Purbi Singhbhum

		17	Ramgarh
		18	Ranchi(Rural)
		19	Saraikela(N)
		20	Simdega(N)
8	KARNATAKA	1	Bijapur
		2	Chamrajnagar
		3	Chitradurga
		4	Gulbarga
		5	Mysore
		6	Tumkur
		7	Gadag
		8	Koppal
9	MADHYA PRADESH	1	Sager
		2	Damoh
		3	Tikamgarh
		4	Panna
		5	Chahatapur
		6	Jhabua
		7	Dhar
		8	Annupur
		9	Balaghat
		10	Dindori
		11	Mandala
		12	Seoni
		13	Shahdol
		14	Sidhi
		15	Umaria

		16	Chhindwara
		17	Singrauli
		18	Badwani
		19	Sheopur
		20	Alirajpur
10	MAHARASHTRA	1	Solapur
		2	Ratnagiri
		3	Thane
		4	Wardha
		5	Beed
		6	Sindhurdurg
		7	Chandrapur
		8	Gadchiroli
		9	Gondia
		10	Jalna
		11	Osmanabad
		12	Nandurbar
		13	Yavatmal
11	ODISHA	1	Angul
		2	Bhadrak
		3	Balasore
		4	Cuttack
		5	Balangir
		6	Devagarh
		7	Gajapati
		8	Ganjam
		9	Jaipur

		10	Kalahandi
		11	Kandhamal
		12	Kendujhar
		13	Koraput
		14	Malkangiri
		15	Mayurbhanj
		16	Nabarangpur
		17	Nayagarh
		18	Nuapada
		19	Rayagada
		20	Sambalpur
		21	Sonapur
		22	Sundargarh
12	RAJASTHAN	1	Dungarpur
		2	Banswara
		3	Dholpur
		4	Jhalawar
		5	Baran
		6	Ajmer
		7	Alwar
		8	Dausa
		9	Udaipur
13	TAMIL NADU	1	Cuddalore
		2	Nagapattinam
		3	Thanjaore
		4	Trichy
		5	Dindugal

		6	Vilupuram
		7	Vellore
		8	Thiruvannamalai
		9	Dharmapuri
14	UTTAR PRADESH	1	Agra
		2	Aligarh
		3	Auraiya
		4	Basti
		5	Bijnor
		6	Lakhimpur Kheri
		7	Unnao
		8	Varanasi
		9	Bara banki
		10	Gorakhpur
		11	Lucknow
		12	Chandauli
		13	Mirzapur
		14	Sonbhadra
		15	Badaun
		16	Hardoi
		17	Etwah
		18	Azamgarh
		19	Allahabad
		20	Ambedkarnagar
		21	Bahraich
		22	Deoria
		23	Jalaun

		24	Hamirpur
		25	Banda
15	WEST BENGAL	1	Alipurduar
		2	Purba Medinipur
		3	South 24 Parganas
		4	Bankura
		5	Medinipur West
		6	Coochbehar
		7	Birbhum
		8	Puruliya
16	TELANGANA	1	Mahabubnagar
		2	Adilabad
		3	Warangal
		4	Khammam
		5	Karimnagar
17	KERALA	1	Idukki
		2	Vayanadu
		3	Pallakkad
		4	Mallapuram
18	HARYANA	1	Mahendergarh
		2	Karnal
		3	Jind
		4	Mewat
		5	Bhiwani
		6	Jhajjar
19	HIMACHAL PRADESH	1	Kangra
		2	Una

		3	Shimla
		4	Mandi
20	JAMMU & KASHMIR	1	Kupwara
		2	Poonch
		3	Kistwar
		4	Ganderbal
		5	Budgam
		6	Udhampur
21	PUNJAB	1	Patiala
		2	Sangrur
		3	Bathinda
		4	Tarn Taran
		5	Gurdaspur
		6	Ferozepur
22	UTTRAKHAND	1	Pithoragarh
		2	Pohri Garwal
		3	Chamoli
		4	Bageshwar
23	MANIPUR	1	Chandel
		2	Imphal East
24	MEGHALAYA	1	West Garo Hills
		2	South West Khasi Hills
		3	West Khasi Hill
25	MIZORAM	1	Serchhip
		2	Aizwal
		3	Lunglei
26	NAGALAND	1	Kiphre

		2	Longleng
		3	Peren
		4	Tuensang
		5	Mon
27	TRIPURA	1	Dhalai
		2	West Tripura
		3	North Tripura
28	PUDUCHERRY	1	Puducherry
29	ANDAMAN & NICOBAR	1	North & Middle Andhman Dist
	ISLANDS		
30	SIKKIM	1	South Sikkim
		2	East Sikkim
31	GOA	1	North Goa

Annexure IV**Statement showing State-wise SHGs since inception to 31/03/2016**

S. No.	State Name	SHGs
1	Andaman Nicobar	80
2	Andhra Pradesh	23731
3	Arunanchal Pradesh	12
4	Assam	793
5	Bihar	2059
6	Chhatisgarh	44
7	Delhi	929
8	Gujarat	861
9	Haryana	527
10	Himachal Pradesh	1551
11	Jammu & Kashmir	238
12	Jharkhand	281
13	Karnataka	2303
14	Kerala	4111
15	Madhya Pradesh	2624
16	Maharashtra	4281
17	Manipur	1011
18	Mizoram	8
19	Nagaland	103
20	Odisha	4692
21	Pondicherry	36
22	Punjab	60
23	Rajasthan	3634
24	Tamil Nadu	20313
25	Telangana	3906
26	Uttar Pradesh	3202
27	Uttranchal	351
28	West Bengal	6489
	Total	88229

APPENDIX I

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2014-2015)

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, THE 07th OCTOBER, 2014

The Committee sat from 1430 hrs. to 1630 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Bijoya Chakravarty - Chairperson

MEMBERS LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Anju Bala
3. Kum. Sushmita Dev
4. Smt. Rama Devi
5. Smt. Jyoti Dhurve
6. Smt. Poonamben Maadam
7. Smt. Jayshreeben Patel
8. Smt. Butta Renuka
9. Smt. Satabdi Roy
10. Smt. Rita Tarai
11. Smt. Savitri Thakur

RAJYA SABHA

12. Smt. Vandan Chavan
13. Smt. Mohsina Kidwai
14. Sh. A. V. Swamy

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita Jain | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Shri S.C. Chaudhary | - | Director |
| 3. | Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan | - | Deputy Secretary |

Representatives of the Ministry of Women and Child Development

1.	Shri V. S. Oberoi	-	Secretary
2.	Smt. Preeti Sudan	-	Additional Secretary
3.	Dr. Vivek Joshi	-	Joint Secretary
4.	Shri I.S. Chahal	-	Joint Secretary
5.	Ms. Sarita Mittal	-	Financial Adviser
6.	Ms. Kirti Saxena	-	Economic Adviser
7.	Shri V.K. Gupta	-	Statistical Adviser
8.	Shri Vinod Mukhi	-	General Manager, RMK

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the members of the Committee to the sitting convened to have a briefing by the representatives of the Ministry of Women and Child Development in connection with examination of the subject 'Empowering Women through Self Help Groups'.

[Witnesses were then called in]

3. After welcoming the witnesses, the Chairperson read out Direction 55, regarding confidentiality of the proceedings. The Chairperson then observed that one of the biggest hurdles in achieving socio-economic development of women in the country is the lack of financial credit facilities and opportunities especially for women belonging to poorer section of the society. The Chairperson also appreciated the fact that the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh has had a positive impact on the livelihood of women, especially those belonging to the weaker sections and further pointed out that this credit fund can become an important tool towards the empowerment of women, both socially and economically.

4. Thereafter, the representatives of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, including the representatives from the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, highlighted the various work undertaken by the organization and also the various measures initiated by the Government to improve its performance in extending collateral free micro financial credit facilities to women belonging to the poorest of the poor for various livelihood and income generating activities at concessional terms. They further informed the Committee that the recovery of loan is one of the

major problem faced by the organization. The Members of the Committee raised various issues regarding the work done by the Ministry and the organization and expressed the need to spread more awareness of the same. The members also expressed the need to decrease the rate of interest as the current rate of 14 per cent is way too high for poor and marginalised women. The members further reiterated the need to have a proper monitoring system to ensure that the loan reaches the targeted beneficiaries. The issues raised by the Chairperson and the Members were replied to by the officers of the Ministry. However, on the queries on which the information was not readily available, the Ministry was directed to furnish written replies to the Secretariat at the earliest.

[The witnesses then withdrew]

5. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2014-2015)

MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, THE 25th FEBRUARY, 2015

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1600 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Bijoya Chakravarty - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Anju Bala
3. Kum. Sushmita Dev
4. Smt. Rama Devi
5. Smt. Riti Pathak
6. Smt. Anupriya Patel
7. Smt. Jayshreeben Patel
8. Smt. Butta Renuka
9. Smt. Mala Rajyalakshmi Shah
10. Smt. Rita Tarai
11. Smt. R. Vanaroja

RAJYA SABHA

12. Smt. Bimla Kashyap Sood
13. Sh. A.V. Swamy

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita Jain - Joint Secretary
2. Shri S.C. Chaudhary - Director
3. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan - Deputy Secretary

Representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development

1. Ms. Vandana Kumari Jena - Secretary,
2. Shri S. M. Vijayanand - Special Secretary
3. Shri T. Vijay Kumar - Additional Secretary (Rural Livelihoods) & Director General, CAPART

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the members of the Committee to the sitting convened to have a briefing by the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development in connection with examination of the subject 'Empowering Women through Self Help Groups'.

[Witnesses were then called in]

3. After welcoming the witnesses, the Chairperson read out Direction 55, regarding confidentiality of the proceedings. In her initial remarks the Chairperson apprised the representatives of the Ministry regarding the quest of the Committee to have comprehensive understanding of the functioning of self help groups in different states. After that, the representatives of the Ministry, through their power point presentation, briefed the Committee about aim and objectives, scope, function and expected outcome of their mission mode project National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) launched in the year 2011.

4. Thereafter, the Committee discussed about uneven development of the Self Help Groups throughout the Country which included high concentration of SHG's in southern states compared to northern and northeastern states, details regarding the functioning of SHGs in States particularly West Bengal, Bihar and U.P. and reasons for less development of SHGs in States like Mizoram, Sikkim, Manipur etc. The other issues which emerged during the sitting were guidelines regarding the functioning of SHGs, economic, social and political empowerment of women through Self Help Groups, income generating activities by the women SHGs under

NRLM, need for full time office bearers, volunteers in the functioning of SHGs, need for awareness campaign in regard to SHGs in the villages and motivational factors in the formation of SHGs. The Committee also desired to have detailed information in regard to Community Resource Persons(CRPs) functioning in different States. Later on, various questions related to the subject were raised by the Members and the Ministry was requested to furnish written replies on those points to the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

[The witnesses then withdrew]

5. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX III

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2014-2015)

MINUTES OF THE THIRTEENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, THE 08th JUNE, 2015

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1615 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Bijoya Chakravarty - Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Anju Bala
3. Smt. Susmita Dev
4. Smt. Jyoti Dhurve
5. Smt. Bhavana Gawali
6. Smt. Rakshatai Khadse
7. Smt. Anupriya Patel
8. Smt. Mala Rajyalakshmi Shah
9. Smt. P.K. Sreemathi Teacher
10. Smt. Savitri Thakur
11. Smt. R. Vanaroja
12. Smt. Supriya Sule

RAJYA SABHA

13. Smt. Vandana Chavan
14. Smt. Mohsina Kidwai
15. Shri A.V.Swamy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.C. Chaudhary - Director
2. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan - Deputy Secretary

Representatives of M/o Finance (Department of Financial Services)

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Dr. Hasmukh Adhia, | - | Secretary, DFS |
| 2. | Ms. Snehlata Shrivastava | - | Additional Secretary, DFS |
| 3. | Sh. Alok Tandon | - | Joint Secretary, DFS |
| 4. | Sh. A.K. Dogra | - | Deputy Secretary, DFS |
| 5. | Sh. Harsh Kumar Bhanwala | - | Chairman, NABARD |
| 6. | Ms. H.R. Dave | - | Dy. Managing Director, NABARD |
| 7. | Sh. A.K. Mohanty | - | GM, NABARD |
| 8. | Ms. Renuka Kumar | - | Director, M/o Rural Development |
| 9. | Sh. Prabhat Kumar | - | DGM, RBI |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the members of the Committee to the sitting convened to have an oral evidence of the M/o Finance (Department of Financial Services) in connection with examination of the subject 'Empowering Women through Self Help Groups'.

[Witnesses were then called in]

3. After welcoming the witnesses, the Chairperson read out Direction 55, regarding confidentiality of the proceedings. The Chairperson then observed that Self-Help Groups come across many hindrances in terms of training, guidance, support, loan availability, marketing of their products and emphasised on Self-Help group and Bank-Linkage programme (SHG-BLP) as an important tool for enhancing the capacity of the rural and poor women. After that, Chairman NABARD, briefed the Committee through a power point presentation on SHG-BLP programme, detailing different aspects of the programme, including its evolution, reach, impact on Self-Help groups, role of the Government and NABARD and also the social and financial capital it has thus far created.

4. Thereafter, the Committee discussed about the other vital issues as well, namely, interest variations on loans to SHGs, product diversifications and the market linkages with the purpose of eliciting appropriate responses from the concerned representatives. The representatives, subsequently, among other replies, talked of diverse initiatives including e-

commerce, e-portal and linking-up of SHG products with e-portal with regard to improving market-linkages.

5. The other issues that emerged during the discussion involved National Rural Livelihood Mission and SHGs, special attention that could be given by NABARD to SHGs in villages adopted by Members, funding pattern under NRLM, two distinct interventions namely Aajeevika Skill Development Programme and Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana, inherent difference between NRLM and SGSY, SHGs run by urban poor and their problems, regulation of micro-finance institutions and social audit of SHGs etc. Other aspects that came up for deliberation comprised the importance of social education, issue of lop-sided spread of SHGs across the country, micro enterprises development programme of NABARD and imminent MUDRA bank and its role vis-à-vis regulatory environment of micro-finance institutions in the country.

6. The clarifications sought by the Members on various points were provided by the representatives. The sitting ended with a request by the Hon'ble Chairperson of the Committee to the Ministry to come up with a sort of written rules and regulations on SHGs that might be helpful for the Members to go to the public, form the SHGs and help them through.

[The witnesses then withdrew]

7. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX IV

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2014-2015)

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY, THE 21st AUGUST, 2015

The Committee sat on Friday, the 21st August, 2015 from 1500 hrs. to 1615 hours in Committee Room 'D', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Jayshreeben Patel - Acting Chairperson

MEMBERS LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Anju Bala
3. Smt. Rama Devi
4. Smt. Jyoti Dhurve
5. Smt. Anupriya Patel
6. Smt. Satabdi Roy
7. Smt. Rita Tarai
8. Smt. P.K. Sreemathi Teacher
9. Smt. R. Vanaroja

RAJYA SABHA

10. Smt. Vandana Chavan
11. Smt. Mohsina Kidwai
12. Smt. Kahkashan Perween
13. Shri A.V.Swamy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.C. Chaudhary - Director
2. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan - Deputy Secretary

2. In the absence of the Hon'ble Chairperson, Smt. Jayshreeben Patel chaired the meeting. At the outset, the acting Chairperson welcomed the members of the Committee to the sitting convened to take oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development in connection with examination of the subject 'Empowering Women through Self Help Groups'.

[Witnesses were then called in]

3. After welcoming the witnesses, the Chairperson read out Direction 55 (1) regarding confidentiality of the proceedings.

4. The Members of the Committee raised queries concerning various issues related to Self Help Groups like the issue of budgetary support, challenges of linkages with the market, repayments by SHGs, interest rate charged from them, revamp of Self Help Groups etc.

5. The Members also raised various questions upon the issues mentioned above. The issues raised by the Chairperson and the Members were replied to by the officers of the Ministry. However, on the queries on which the information was not readily available, the Ministry of Rural Development were directed to furnish written replies to the Secretariat at the earliest.

[The witnesses then withdrew]

[The Committee then adjourned]

6. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

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APPENDIX V

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2016-2017)

MINUTES OF THE FIFTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, THE 15TH DECEMBER, 2016

The Committee sat from 1000 hrs. to 1050 hrs. in Room No. 130 (Chairperson's Chamber), Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Bijoya Chakravarty - Chairperson

MEMBERS **LOK SABHA**

2. Smt. Anju Bala
3. Smt. Renuka Butta
4. Km. Sushmita Dev
5. Smt. Rama Devi
6. Smt. Darshaben Jardosh
7. Smt. Jayshreeben Patel
8. Smt. Riti Pathak
9. Sadhvi Savitri Bai Phoole
10. Smt. Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
11. Smt. Supriya Sule
12. Smt. Rita Tarai
13. Smt. P.K. Sreemathi Teacher

RAJYA SABHA

14. Smt. Rajani Patil
15. Smt. Kahkashan Perween
16. Ms. Dola Sen
17. Shri A.V. Swamy
18. Smt. Wansuk Syiem

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri N. C. Gupta - Joint Secretary
2. Shri T. S. Rangarajan - Director

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the members to the sitting of the Committee. The Committee thereafter took up for consideration the Draft Report on the subject 'Empowering Women through Self Help Groups'. After discussing the Draft Report in detail, the Committee adopted the Draft Report without modifications.

3. The Committee also authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Draft Report and present the same to both the Houses of Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.
