

Sichajak Kami Sokat (Enlightened Village Award): A Vehicle for attainment of Human Development Goals

Background

There is higher incidence of poverty among the people residing in the TTAADC area which is further accentuated due to weak health and hygiene awareness, poor literacy rates and higher drop out rates in schools. State Government and TTAADC have been trying to significantly improve the social indicators in the TTAADC villages for which heavy investment in various sectors is being made.

Role of Village Committees in social sector programmes

Tripura has a strong tradition of vibrant PRI system which is actively involved in implementation of government programmes at village level. The elected village committees in TTAADC areas are playing crucial role in implementing Government programmes. In order to improve the overall human development index (HDI) in TTAADC area, there is need to improve the efficiency of programme implementation in five key social sectors i.e. education, health, nutrition, water and sanitation. This is possible if the Village Committees are closely involved with the programme implementation and monitor the actual outcomes or indicators.

Village Incentive Scheme

It is proposed to introduce an incentive scheme to reward the village committees which perform well in social sector programme implementation. The award may be titled "*Sichajak Kami Sokat.*" The village committees doing well on the indicators related to the five key social sector programmes will be awarded this prize in a ceremony to be organised at Headquarter level.

The key indicators (including means of verification) on which the performance of a village committee may be measured are given in the table 1 below;

Table 1

<i>Sl No</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Data to be monitored</i>	<i>Source of data</i>	<i>Role of key functionaries (other than VC Chairmen and members)</i>	<i>Points / weightage</i>	<i>Minimum cut off percentage achievement</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Institutional delivery	List of total pregnant women and total number of institutional deliveries or deliveries through trained dhais	ICDS register	Data maintained by AWW at ICDS center + ASHA worker	9	60 % safe deliveries
2	Immunisation of pregnant women	All pregnant women are immunised against tetanus	ICDS register	AWW + ASHA	5	80 % pregnant women
3	Birth registration	List of all deliveries whether registered in the Birth register and birth certificates issued within 28 days of registration	Birth register + inputs from ICDS/ASHA/ PHC	Village secretary/ BDO	4	80 % of all births
4	Death registration	All deaths being registered and certificate issued within 28 days/ Death register	Death register of panchayat	Village secretary/ BDO	4	80 % of all deaths
5	Marriage at right age	No girl below 18 years and no boy below 21 year is married in the Village. All marriages are registered	Register maintained in the Village Committee	Village secretary/ BDO	4	80% of all marriages

6	Immunisation	Number of children given full immunisation after birth (OPV+ DPT + Measles)	ICDS + PHC	AWW + ASHA	9	60 % of children given all vaccine doses
7	Nutrition	Awareness about exclusive breastfeeding among pregnant/ lactating women	ICDS + field verification	AWW + ASHA	5	50% of pregnant and lactating women are aware
8	Maintenance of nutrition record in AWW	Height/ weight measurement, use of coloured band to measure level of malnourishment if any and maintenance of register in ICDS center	ICDS + field verification	AWW + ASHA	10	Record of at least 60% children is well maintained
9	ORS preparation	Training of all households about preparing ORS and its use during diarrhoea	ICDS + Sub centre + field verification	AWW + ASHA + health volunteer	5	At least one member in 60% households knows to prepare ORS
10	Education	All children are enrolled in the Primary class	School register + comparison with birth register data	School headmaster + Teacher	5	90% children enrolled (comparison from the birth register)
11	Education	Schools function regularly and teachers attend school	School records + field verification	School headmaster	10	100%
12	Education	Mid day meal programme is normal and regular in school	School records + field verification	School headmaster	5	100%
13	Sanitation	All households use a toilet and no open defecation	Field verification + VC records	VC	10	75% households have sanitary toilets
14	Sanitation	All children in schools are trained and practise hand washing before taking midday meal	School records + field verification	School headmaster	5	75% children practice hand washing at critical times
15	Water	All households store drinking water safely using lid to cover vessel	Field verification	VC secretary + AWW + ASHA	5	75% households store water safely
16	Water	There is no water logging near the water point (proper platform and soakage pit/ soakage channel	field verification	VC secretary	5	80% water sources have proper platform , soak pits/ soakage channels etc to avoid water logging
		Total			100	

Application and verification process

Each Village committee which claims to have achieved significantly against the 16 indicators will apply for the award in a prescribed application form giving various details. Only those village committees will be eligible to apply which have achieved the prescribed minimum cut off percentage as indicated in column 7 of table 1. TTAADC will prepare a list of remote and extremely backward villages for whom the cut off percentage will be lower by 15%.The

preliminary scrutiny of the applications will be done at zonal level by an interdepartmental committee formed consisting of representatives from various departments of TAAADC. This committee will consist of the following;

- ZDO Chairman
- Addl ZDO Member Secretary
- All SZDOs Member
- MO Health Member
- All Inspector of schools Member
- CSEO Member
- EE PWD Member

If need arises, officers from State Government may also be co-opted in these committees in consultation with respective departments. Scrutiny at zone level will include checking of the application forms as well as basic field enquiry. The applications prima facie meeting the eligibility criteria will be forwarded to TTAADC, Khumulwng.

At TTAADC H/Q, an interdepartmental committee consisting of representatives of all concerned departments will scrutinise the applications. The committee will consist of the following;

- CEO TTAADC Chairman
- Addl CEO Member
- Dy CEO Member
- EO Finance Member
- PO Health Member
- PO Education Member
- Dy PO Social Edn Member
- SE PWD Member
- PO RD Member
- PO ICAT Member
- PO VC Member Secretary

This committee may engage professional agencies or academic institutions to do field verification of the applications submitted by the Village committees. In addition, officials from one zone may be sent to another zone to verify the claims of the VCs.

Award

There will be three awards given to the three best VCs in each Zone. VCs scoring maximum marks after verification of their claims will be selected for the zone level award. Three best VCs among the VCs selected for the zone level award will be considered for the Council level award and best three teams will be awarded. In addition, in each Zone one award may be given to the best performer among the most backward village committees. This award will be treated at par with third prize of zone level award. All the awards will be distributed at the Khumulwng Headquarter in a ceremony where dignitaries like HE Governor of Tripura or Hon'ble Chief Minister may be invited to give away the awards.

In addition citation will be given to those field functionaries who have been instrumental in achieving 100% on any of the key indicators mentioned in table 1.

Quantum of Award

For *Zone level awards* following amount of award may be given to the selected VCs in each zone;

First prize: Rs 2 lakh + citation

Second Prize: Rs 1.5 lakh + citation

Third Prize: Rs 1 lakh + citation

For *Council level awards* following amount may be given as award;

First prize: Rs 5 lakh + citation

Second Prize: Rs 3 lakh + citation

Third Prize: Rs 2 lakh + citation

Cash ward will be given in two instalments in two different financial years. The second instalment will be subject to the condition that the VC is able to retain its pervious year position and has not slipped back from what it had already achieved. This will ensure that the efforts made by VC are sustainable. Reward money will be utilized by the VC for community works as approved in the gram sabha.

Way Forward

Workshop of all Village Committee Chairmen and members, Zone level officials, Anaganwadi workers, ASHA workers, School Headmasters, Village Secretaries, relevant state government officials to educate them about the key indicators and their relevance in overall social development, key elements of the award, application process, verification process and emphasising upon the necessity of their involvement in improving various social indicators for overall well-being of the people residing in the TTAADC area. A small leaflet alongwith application form will be printed and supplied to the participants in the workshop. The award applications may be invited for the financial year 2009-10 by April 2010 and scrutiny completed by July 2010. The awards may be distributed in a function on the Independence Day or a day before every year.

The state government may also be requested to advise all line departments to render necessary support to the interested and enthusiastic VCs. This will automatically ensure convergence of efforts of all line departments at the village level. The concerned Line Departments are as under:

- Health & Family Welfare Department
- Panchayati Raj Department
- Social welfare Department
- School Education Department
- Rural Development Department

Funding

Fund earmarked with VC wing of TTAADC will be used for organising workshops, verification of applications and distribution of awards.

Expected benefits

TTAADC will be able to focus the attention of elected representatives as well as officials on the key social indicators which are essential for sustained development of people in ADC area. This will further ensure that the key indicators actually improve in the TTAADC areas and VC s is in a position to demand for proper utilisation of resources from various line departments. With little investment made, TTAADC will be able to mobilise large investment in social sector in various village committees.