Ministry of Rural Development
Governmentof India

AajeeVikaSkills
Learn Earn

Guidelines
September 2013

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Abbreviations

AAP	Annual Action Plan (The equivalent of this for Non-AAP states in Year Programme)
APL	Above Poverty Line
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CAG	Controller and Auditor General
CAPART	Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
COO	Chief Operating Officer
CPSMS	Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System
CRP	Community Resource Person
CSOs	Community Social Organizations
DONER	Development of North Eastern Region
DRDA	District Rural Development Authority
DSS	Decision Support System
EC	Empowered Committee
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FMS	Financial Management System
GOI	Government of India
GP	Gram Panchayat
IAP	Integrated Action Plan
IAY	Indira Awas Yojana
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IEC	Information Education Communication
IFD	Integrated Finance Division
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
IT	Information Technology
ITI	Industrial Training Institute
LWE	Left Wing Extremist
LQAS	Lot Quality Assurance Sampling
MES	Modular Employable Skills
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MIS	Management Information Systems
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

MSP	Multi State Project
MSME	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
NABARD	National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development
NABCONS	NABARD Consultancy Services
NAG	National Advisory Group
NCVT	National Council for Vocational Training
NIRD	National Institute of Rural Development
NIOS	National Institute of Open Schooling
NMMU	National Mission Management Unit
NRHM	National Rural Health Mission
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSDA	National Skill Development Agency
NSDM	National Skill Development Mission
NSAP	National Social Assistance Programme
OJT	On Job Training
PAC	Project Approval Committee
PIAs	Project Implementing Agencies
PIP	Participatory Identification of Poor
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PWD	Persons with Disability
RD	Rural Development
RL	Rural Livelihood
SRLM	State Rural Livelihood Mission
SC/ST	Scheduled Castes /Scheduled Tribes
SGSY	Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana
SHG	Self Help Group
SPIP	State Perspective and Implementation Plan
SSP	Single State Project
TSA	Technical Support Agency
UC	Utilization Certificate
YP	Year Programme (This is the equivalent of AAP for non-AAP States)

Preface

Aajeevika Skills is the skill and placement initiative of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India (MoRD). It evolved out of the need to diversify incomes of the rural poor and to cater to the occupational aspirations of their youth. The programme's focus is on skilling and placement in the formal sector for rural youth who are poor. Aajeevika Skills has its origins in the 'Special Projects' component of the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

Besides helping to reduce poverty, it rides on the hopes and aspirations for a better quality of life in large sections of the rural poor. This has greater significance in the current context, where 430 million people in our country are in the age group 15-34 and constitute 35% of the population (Census 2011). This age group is projected to increase to 464 million by 2021. This can result in a "demographic dividend" for India if the capabilities of the youth are also developed.

Prime Minister of India had raised these concerns in 2008 when he said, "We enjoy a great advantage today of having the largest population of young people in the world. If we invest adequately in their education and employability, this youth power has the capacity to make India shape the emerging world order with a possibility of claiming a fourth of the global workforce. Turning the advantage of our young population to become the largest pool of technically trained manpower in the world is one of the most significant policy initiatives that need to be taken collectively by the Central and the State Governments today ".

However, considering the present status of the workforce in terms of educational attainment and skill training, this is a big challenge. If the challenge is overcome by investing adequately in their education and employability, this youth power has the potential to transform the Indian economy. Turning this potential into reality is a significant initiative that the Central and the State governments have embarked upon. One estimate has it that India has the capacity to create 500 million skilled and certified technicians by the year 2022. By 2020, India is also expected to have a surplus of 56 million youth while the rest of the world faces a shortage of 47 million. Moreover, in a fast changing industrial environment, it is recognised that skill building is not a static process and that individual's skills needs to be upgraded continuously if the workforce is to remain relevant and employable.

Government of India initiated steps for a coordinated action on skill development in 2008 by putting in place a governance structure for implementation of skill initiatives at highest level. It also worked on a policy for providing an enabling environment and framework to address the challenges of skill development. A three tier governance structure for skill development was established. It consisted of:

i.   The Prime Minister's Council on Skill Development (PMNCSD) as the apex body for policy direction
ii. The National Skill Development Coordination Board (NSDCB) in Planning Commission for coordinating and synergizing the efforts of the various central ministries involved in the skill development
iii. National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for catalysing private sector efforts in the skill development.

A National Policy on Skill Development of 2009 was notified that focused on policy coherence, inclusivity, improving quality with emphasis on employment outcomes. Subsequently, in June, 2013, Government of India constituted an autonomous body called the National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) by subsuming the PMNCSD, NSDCB and the Office of the Adviser to the PM on Skill Development.

The NSDA is located in the Ministry of Finance. It will coordinate and harmonise the skill development efforts of the Government and the private sector to:
i. Achieve the skilling targets of the 12th Plan and beyond;
ii. Anchor and operationalize the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF);
iii. Be the nodal agency for Sector Skills Councils and endeavour to bridge the social, regional, gender and economic divides in skilling.

The NSDA provides the much needed single point focus to ensure that skilling quality and standards meet sector specific requirements benchmarked to international standards.

The above initiatives will help in achieving the vision of creating 500 million skilled people by 2022. This aspiration exceeds current resources and therefore much of the effort must be directed towards resource augmentation and capacity development. Sufficient attention has to be given to design the skill development programme for inclusiveness and to deal with the divides in society such as gender, rural/urban, organised/unorganised employment and traditional/contemporary work place etc. The focus is on designing interventions that ensure that the supply of trained manpower adjusts dynamically to the changes in demand for employment. Finally, the system must not discriminate between private and public delivery and should focus on outcomes, consumer choice and competition.

The Strategy envisaged for operationalizing the skill development initiatives has three features.
i. The process of skill acquisition must be bankable, including for the poor. The approach should be demand-driven. This does not preclude State support to the candidates from deprived sections. The effort should be to complement public investment with institutional/bank finance.
ii. Skills must be substitutable, the rigid boundaries between categories of Education, diplomas and degrees has created a rigid structure within education. This must be transformed into a more open/flexible system that permits competent individuals to accumulate their knowledge and skills, and convert them through testing and certification into higher diplomas and degrees.
iii. Partnerships should be between various stakeholders in the skill development eco system.

The programmes of Ministry of Rural Development's (MoRD) for self-employment and creation of assets started with Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) in the year 1980. During the 9th plan period, Self-Employment Programmes were revamped by merging the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), the Supply of Improved Tool-Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA), the Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), the Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY) and the Million Wells Scheme (MWS) into a holistic self-employment scheme called Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). It graduated in 2004 to Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)- Special Projects. The SGSY special projects provided time-bound training and capacity building for bringing a specific number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families above poverty through skilling and placement in jobs that provided regular wage employment. Up until May 2013, around 8.60 lakh have been trained and 6.80 lakh youth have been given employment. This programme was revisited in the light of the new Skills framework and repositioned under Aajeevika as Aajeevika Skills.

During the 12th Plan, MoRD has been given the target to skill 50 lakh rural BPL youth. Accordingly, the strategy has been revisited and a decision taken to move from direct implementation by the Central government to further build capacities of State Governments for implementation of Aajeevika Skills and to help build coordination mechanisms at Central levels to improve the skilling delivery process. MoRD has over the last nine months undertaken a detailed exercise to revise the operational guidelines for Aajeevika Skills so that it is able to address the challenge of imparting skills to 50 lakh people during the 12th Plan. It did this in consultation with all stakeholders, particularly State Governments, Aajeevika Skills implementing partners, employers and poor rural youth. It also benefitted from the lessons learnt in rolling out Himayat in collaboration with the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir. It has also benefitted from the learning's from implementing skilling programmes over the last three decades.

These guidelines are the product of these efforts.

1. Rationale and Approach

1.1 What is Aajeevika Skills?

1.1.1   Aajeevika Skills aims to skill rural youth who are poor and provide them with jobs having regular[1] monthly wages at or above the minimum wages. It is one of the cluster of initiatives of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India that seeks to promote rural livelihoods. It is a part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) - the Mission for poverty reduction called Aajeevika.

1.1.2   MoRD pursues its goal of rural poverty reduction by adopting a multi-pronged strategy. This includes programs for rural infrastructure (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana – PMGSY), rural housing (Indira Awas Yojana - IAY), employment guarantee (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme - MGNREGS), livelihood promotion (National Rural Livelihood Mission - Aajeevika) and social pensions (National Social Assistance Programme - NSAP). Aajeevika Skills derives its importance from its potential to reduce poverty by diversifying incomes and reducing their uncertainty.

1.1.3   There is a continuum of skills that are required in an economy and there are various ways in which to acquire them. In India, while higher-level skills have received some attention, the same cannot be said for skills for which formal education is not a prerequisite.

This means that the poor are doubly hit - first because of poverty and second because of poor access to formal education. Aajeevika Skills seeks to fill this gap by imparting specific set of knowledge, skills and attitude needed by the poor to access full time jobs in the formal sector.

1.2 What is skilling and placement?

1.2.1   Skilling and placement under Aajeevika Skills involves eight distinct steps:
i.   Awareness building within the community on the opportunities
ii.   Identifying rural youth who are poor[2]
iii.   Mobilising rural youth who are interested
iv.   Counselling of youth and parents
v.   Selection based on aptitude
vi.   Imparting knowledge, industry linked skills and attitude that enhance employability
vii.   Providing jobs that can be verified through methods that can stand up to independent scrutiny, and which pays above minimum wages
viii.   Supporting the person so employed for sustainability after placement

1.2.2   There are seven types of interventions that Aajeevika Skills supports. All are executed with the help of Project Implementing Agency (PIAs)[3] and retention is tracked[4]. These interventions are for:

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[1] The proof of regular wage employment is demonstrated by the salary slip from the Human Resources(HR) department of the organization. In case the organization does not have a HR department, certificate issued by the employer indicating wages paid and counter signed by the employee along with the bank statement indicating that wages have been paid by crossed demand draft or money transfer will demonstrate proof of regular wage employment.

[2] Where participatory identification of the poor has been completed by the SRLM team, the ranked list they produce will be used. In other cases the latest version of the BPL/Socio Economic and Caste Census(SECC) list is to be used.

[3] PIAs are required to place a minimum of 75% of those who are trained with in jobs having regular monthly wages. This is a non-negotiable. There are also separate targets for SC/ST/minorities and women. Shortfalls up to 5% of target will be considered in individual categories but the amount payable to the PIA per trainee will be deducted to extent of the shortfall in each category.

[4] Retention tracking for all Aajeevika Skills interventions is for 365 calendar days

i.   Persons who are placed after a three month training program on skill, soft skills[5], English and Information Technology (IT).
ii. Persons who are placed after a six month training program on skill, soft skills, English and IT.
iii. Persons who are placed after a nine month training program on skill, soft skills, English and IT.
iv. Persons who are placed after a two part training program of nine + three months. The nine month period is used to enable acquisition of a National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) qualification (8th or 10th class). The three month period is the standard Aajeevika Skills, soft skills, English and IT intervention.
v.   Persons who are placed in a foreign country after a customised training program not more than 12 months in duration.
vi. Persons who are placed after a three, six, nine or twelve month training program with provision for On the Job Training (OJT).[6]

1.2.3 Aajeevika Skills supports Job fairs which help in placing people without providing skill input

1.3 Approach of Aajeevika Skills

Aajeevika Skills has a number of features. These are described below. Some of these are distinct from skilling efforts of other departments in Government of India.

1.3.1. Shift in emphasis - from training to career progression

In the skills sector the emphasis traditionally has been on skilling. With the Special Projects for Skill development under Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), MoRD broke new ground by insisting on placement. This was further refined by defining placement as continuous work for three months with salary slip as evidence. These guidelines extend/sharpen this as follows:

i.   Proof of regular wage employment demonstrated by the salary slip from the Human Resources department of the organization. In case the organization does not have a HR department, certificate issued by the employer indicating wages paid and counter signed by the employee along with the bank statement indicating that wages have been paid by crossed demand draft or money transfer will demonstrate proof of regular wage employment.
ii. Introducing post placement tracking, counselling and facilitation for a period of one year.
iii. Retention i.e. continuous work over a period of 365 days with a maximum break of 60 calendar days during this period as a goal[7].

Going forward we aspire to shift emphasis by providing resources for career progression through further skill up gradation.

1.3.2. Enable poor and marginalised to access benefits from growth

Aajeevika Skills is designed to equip unemployed youth from rural poor households with employable skills that enable them to secure employment with regular monthly wages. Aajeevika Skills projects are implemented in partnership with private sector, public sector and Civil Society Organisations (CSO) (alternately called PIA). Aajeevika Skills pursues its mandate to assist the rural poor by:

i.   Ensuring that all trainees are from poor rural households.
ii. Ensuring that trainees are able to access skilling and placement services free of cost.
iii. Adopting a Gram Panchayat (GP) saturation approach to enrolment to enable better mutual support.

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[5] Soft skills include reading, writing, speaking, team work, learning, work ethic, financial literacy, time management etc.

[6] The maximum permissible days for OJT are 30 days for a three month course, 60 days for a six month course and 90 days for a one year course.

[7] PIA's under Aajeevika Skills are being encouraged to pursue retention and are being given additional resources to make it viable.

iv. Providing financial assistance for transport/ lodging and food during training.

v. Providing for post placement support for six months.

vi. Providing for post-placement counselling, facilitation and tracking for one year.

vii. Providing training in a number of trades that do not require formal education.

viii. Working with G.P and Self Help Groups (SHGs) to authenticate performance.

ix. Encouraging exemplary performance in skill development by various stakeholders by instituting awards by State Governments.

1.3.3 Ease the pain of migration when it is inevitable

Skills and placement in many cases involves migration of youth from their place of residence to locations within or outside their districts and in townships outside the State. Rural youth moving out of their homes face issues with respect to accommodation, food, isolation, work culture and social norms and sometimes fall prey to ill health, substance abuse, trafficking and exploitation. They also take time in adjusting to the work regime in the formal sector. Aajeevika Skills helps to ease the pain in three ways.

i. By helping candidates make an informed choice about training courses that match their aptitude.

ii. By preparing trainees to take up employment away from home.

iii. By providing counselling and support services for one year.

Migration Support Centre (MSC) is a permissible activity under Aajeevika Skills. These are two types of MSCs. MSCs inside the State will take care of the needs of vulnerable categories, especially SC, ST and Women. MSC outside the State will be in areas where there are large numbers of Aajeevika Skills trainees placed. Funding is provided to the State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM) which may take up this activity on its own or with the help of a PIA. Besides the MSC each PIA is also required to open a call centre to which their trainees and alumni can turn to for help for up to one year after completion of training.

1.3.4. Proactive approach to building partnerships

SGSY special projects for skill development were implemented through Public Private Partnerships (PPP). The experience of implementing the programme has helped in developing and improving the capabilities of a number of PIAs. In the context of MoRD having been given a target of 50 lakhs for skill development and placement during the 12th five year plan, special efforts are being made to streamline procedures and bring on board new partners. To this end outreach events are being organised in different parts of the country and training programs for staff of existing and potential PIAs are being organised.

1.3.5. Monitoring both inputs & outputs

Monitoring of inputs and outputs are critical for ensuring the success of Aajeevika Skills. So far the focus has been on ensuring placement i.e. outputs. Through these guidelines there is a re-balancing of effort by giving due attention to matters such as trainer and training quality, training centre infrastructure and design, teaching learning materials, certification etc.

1.3.6. From projects to batches

Going forward, once the internet enabled workflow driven Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform for skills (of MoRD) is in place the plan is to shift from the current system of sanctioning individual projects will give way to empaneling of PIAs by States who are financed on a continuing basis.

1.3.7. State government as the main player- Single State Project (SSP) to Annual Action Plans (AAP)

The learnings from implementing Multi-State Projects (MSP) and the experiences of initiatives taken by certain State Governments have shown that the involvement of State Governments in Aajeevika Skills is critical to its success.

Many State Governments are currently unaware of their importance in ensuring the success of Aajeevika Skills projects. This has implications for mobilisation, scalability, accountability

of PIA partners, sensitiveness to demand for different trades and their related mix of skills and supply dynamics. It is also seen that when State Governments have their own skill development programme with a dedicated machinery that does tracking and monitoring of training, it has led to better quality outcomes – training, placement, retention and career progression. These States are in a better position to identify deserving poor candidates, assess local skill gaps, propose suitable skilling programmes, monitor training and placement and muster support for the trainees when they are most vulnerable i.e. in the first six months.

MoRD's strategy for Aajeevika Skills in the 12th five year plan is to move from direct implementation to further build capacities of State Governments for implementation of the programme and to focus at the Central level on improving the quality of design and delivery of the skilling process. For this purpose, States will be required to prepare Annual Action Plans (AAPs) for Skill Development and Placement as a separate component of their overall NRLM AAP. In due course, the AAPs would be prepared within the framework of a State Perspective Implementation Plan (SPIP) for skills. Once the AAP has been approved by the Empowered Committee (EC) of MoRD, specific project implementation (through PIAs) and monitoring would be done by the States.

MoRD will actively partner with states to build their capacity and to devolve power and responsibility according to each state's capacity. At present, the capacity to implement this programme is not uniform across states. Availability of an implementation mechanism at state, district and sub district levels will enable states to engage with this challenge in a structured and effective way. States that have achieved AAP status for skills can immediately formulate their AAPs in consonance with these guidelines. Others would need to meet the following five readiness conditions before they can achieve AAP status.

i. Establish a separate cell in the SRLM for skills and placement
ii. Position a full time Chief Operating Officer(COO)/Programme Manager(Skills) for Aajeevika Skills
iii. Position full time dedicated staff at district and sub-district levels for Aajeevika Skills
iv. Operationalise an effective appraisal and monitoring system for Aajeevika Skills
v. Publish a state policy on use of state owned premises and other infrastructure by PIAs implementing Aajeevika Skills projects.

Until the above happens, Aajeevika Skills projects will be sanctioned in accordance with sections in these guidelines relevant for Single State Projects (SSPs), to PIAs proposing state-specific projects. The States have to provide the relevant state share mandated under NRLM, 10% for North-Eastern States (including Sikkim) and 25% for all other states. However, in case of skilling projects under Himayat initiative in Jammu and Kashmir, the Central assistance shall be 100%.

1.3.8. No New Multi-State Projects
With a view to enabling states to take full ownership of Aajeevika Skills projects it has been decided not to consider any more Multi State Projects (MSP). Only State-specific projects recommended by the respective State Governments will be considered by the Ministry. MSPs that are under various stages of implementation will continue till they are completed. These projects will be funded only till its orderly closure.

1.3.9. North East- a priority
MoRD plans to launch a special scheme under Aajeevika Skills in collaboration with Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER) for skilling projects specific to the needs, requirements and the special characteristics of States in the north east. Till such time, these guidelines will be operational, but the needs of the north eastern states will be prioritised and maximum operational flexibility within these guidelines allowed.

1.3.10. Enhancing the Capacity of PIAs

The skilling capacity of training partners has to be augmented on a priority basis. Only then can Aajeevika Skills reach out to all those who need it, irrespective of geography and formal education. New training service providers need to be nurtured, and their capability developed. To this end states need to facilitate the creation of relevant pool of trainers, enable PIAs to access to government infrastructure, get bank loans and handhold new and old training institutions. Only those States that do this quickly and successfully will be able to utilise the full potential of Aajeevika Skills.

1.3.11. Consent and State share is mandatory

Up until now States had the option to ask PIAs to meet the gap in Central funding. This option has now been withdrawn. State contribution to the full extent of state share has been made mandatory. States can however contribute up to a maximum of 10% of project cost in kind by allowing PIAs to use government infrastructure such as Schools/Industrial Training Institutes (ITSs) etc. for skilling purposes. In doing so the costing has to be done as per rates prevailing at the time the State Government recommends/ sanctions a project. Similarly hence forth no SSP projects will be sanctioned by MoRD until it receives the recommendation of the state department in charge of Rural Development.

1.4 Special components of Aajeevika Skills

1.4.1. Roshni – a special scheme for most critical left-wing extremist affected areas

A special scheme called Roshni with separate guidelines has been launched that takes into account the peculiar situation in extremist affected districts. In particular it provides for training programs over different time periods. Currently these are for three, six, nine and twelve months. In the twelve month format besides the normal, skill, IT and soft skill training, trainees are also provided National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) certification (8th or 10th) depending on the level at which they dropped out of the formal school system. These guidelines will be applicable to Roshni projects in both AAP and non AAP states. Efforts will be made to orient Roshni towards addressing the infrastructure, education and health deficiencies in these areas, and leveraging the availability of natural resources and traditional skills and knowledge.

1.4.2. Himayat – a special scheme for Jammu and Kashmir

MoRD operates a special scheme under Aajeevika Skills for Jammu and Kashmir which unlike other Aajeevika Skills flavours covers:

i.   Urban as well as rural youth
ii.   Below Poverty Line(BPL) as well as Above Poverty Line(APL) persons
iii. Wage employment in the formal sector as well as self-employment.

This is a 100% centrally funded scheme implemented with the help of the state government by a dedicated Himayat Mission Management Unit located in both Srinagar and Jammu. The norms in these guidelines will not be applicable to Himayat.

1.4.3. Assistance to States to achieve AAP status

In view of the fact that the capacity to tackle the challenge of skilling and placement for sustainable livelihoods is at present not available in most States, MoRD through National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) and other identified institution, will support SRLMs in developing such capacity. Workshops and training sessions will organised on request for SRLM staff as soon as they are recruited. These workshops will cover, inter alia:

i. Implementation of Aajeevika Skills and key non-negotiables
ii. Preparation of SPIP and AAP
iii. Enabling States to meet readiness conditions necessary to become an AAP state i.e. gain full powers to sanction and monitor Aajeevika Skills projects.
iv. Protocols for selection of PIA
v. Protocols for field appraisal and monitoring of projects
vi. Protocol for inspection and grading of Aajeevika Skills training centres
vii. Building the Aajeevika Skills brand – standardising quality of trainers, training and the look and feel of Aajeevika Skills training centres
viii. Operation of the Programme Management Information System (MIS) (www.aajeevikaskills.gov.in.)
ix. Protocols for monitoring
x. Guidance for bringing existing MSP to an orderly closure
xi. Audit and transparency norms.

1.4.4. Resource States

States that have been successfully implementing skilling programmes have been identified as Resource States. Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have been identified as Resource States. States are encouraged to seek and receive technical and implementation support from these Resource States.

2. Role for Gram Panchayats and Self Help Groups (SHGs)

2.1. Role for Gram Panchayats

The GP have a key role in the successful implementation of Aajeevika Skills, especially to reach out to poorest households within their jurisdiction. As Aajeevika Skills adopts a village saturation approach for skilling, GPs have a role in generating awareness about the programme, facilitating the mobilization efforts, creating databases for skill demand and placement, assist in conducting the Job melas and support the PIA in all stages of implementation. GPs will need to ensure that the most vulnerable sections, including women participate in the programme. They will have to conduct special counseling sessions with the potential candidates as well as parents of the potential candidates and make them aware of the possibilities of the programme. When the PIAs conduct the skill training, the GPs can keep track of the implementation by accessing various MIS reports and direct interaction with the candidates undergoing training. The GPs can bring issues concerning implementation to the attention of concerned authorities at the district and state missions. The GPs can track the placement provided to the candidates after training, interact with candidates and their parents to monitor various aspects in the jobs and act as part of the redressal mechanism.

2.2. Role for Self Help Groups (SHG)

Aajeevika Skills mandate to reach out to poor families through skilling and placement can be achieved by utilizing the potential of the institutions of the poor. The Institutions of the poor – SHGs, their federations and livelihoods collectives - provide the poor the platforms for collective action based on self-help and mutual cooperation. They become a strong demand system on behalf of the poor. These institutions can be involved in various activities including mobilizing target beneficiaries, creating awareness about the programme, assist in identifying beneficiaries, facilitate counselling sessions for parents of the identified youth, monitoring the implementation by the PIAs etc. Therefore, PIAs need to factor in the role of SHGs in developing the Strategy for implementation of their project.

3. Eligibility, Components & Cost Norms

3.1 Eligibility

3.1.1 Rural youth who are poor

The target group for Aajeevika Skills are poor rural youth in the age group 18-35. For those with disabilities and for those who belong to Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) the upper limit is 45 years. Special groups comprising of Persons with Disabilities (PwD), victims of trafficking, manual scavengers, transgender, rehabilitated bonded labour may be allowed to enrol if they are above 16, provided they become 18 by the time they finish training including on the job training if any.

The poor will be identified by a process called Participatory Identification of Poor (PIP) which is an important component of the NRLM strategy. The Protocols for PIP, as notified by the Ministry shall be followed for the purposes. PIP is expected to help in improved targeting of beneficiaries. Till the time poor are identified through the use of PIP, the existing list of Below Poverty Line (BPL) households will be used for identifying the target groups for Aajeevika Skills.

In addition to these, youth that have worked as labourers in MGNREGS work sites for at least 35 days in each of the previous three years will also be eligible even if they are not in the BPL list. It is expected that they will be identified during the PIP.

3.1.2 Focus on SC/ST, minorities and women

At the national level, 50% of the funds would be earmarked for SCs and STs with the proportion between SCs and STs being decided from time to time by the MoRD. A further 15% of the funds would be set apart for beneficiaries from among minority groups. States should also ensure that at least 3% of beneficiaries are from among persons with disabilities. One third of the persons covered should be women. This earmarking is only the minimum. However, targets from SC and ST can be interchanged if there are no eligible beneficiaries from either of the category and it is certified as such by the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA).

In the case of people with disabilities, separate projects[8] have to be submitted. These projects will have separate training centres and the unit costs will be different from those mentioned in these guidelines.

3.1.3 Special groups

Though there are no separate targets for special groups such as PWD, victims of trafficking, manual scavengers, trans-gender, rehabilitated bonded labour and other vulnerable groups, States have to develop strategies that address issues of access of special groups who usually get left out. The nature of affirmative action that is required to overcome their challenges and barriers to participation needs to be incorporated into the skill action plan proposed by the State. In the case of those with hearing and speech impairment, locomotor and visual impairment it will also be necessary to sensitise prospective employers to ensure they get job placements. A note on placement linked training of PwD can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in.

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[8] In case of such special projects, 50% placement has to be guaranteed. Though the PIAs will attempt to include people with disabilities in their projects, it is not mandatory to have 3% of the beneficiaries from special categories in all the projects. There needs to be an overall coverage of 3% people with disabilities at the State level. It will be the responsibility of the SRLM to ensure that projects sanctioned in the States meet the criteria for people with disabilities.

3.2 Components and Cost Norms

Aajeevika Skills activities can be broken up broadly into two parts:
i.   Activities by the SRLM
ii. Activities by PIAs

3.2.1 Activities by SRLM and their Cost Norms

This section details the list of activities that an SRLM is expected to undertake and the cost norms for it. These will also apply to State Nodal Agencies (SNA) that has been designated as the state Aajeevika Skills implementing agency.

3.2.1.1 Skills Gap Assessment (SGA)

SGAs are aimed at identifying GP wise demand for skills and placement and at matching candidate numbers in different skill categories with potential for placement. While data from the decennial census and studies by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) can be a starting point, SRLMs would need to undertake detailed GP wise assessments directly or through professional agencies. SRLMs may also build a state wide youth database with details of those willing and able to benefit from Aajeevika Skills in each GP. Proper study of labour markets to assess skill requirement for jobs within the state and in regions outside it are also need to be carried out from time to time. The best way to build the state youth database is to update data captured by the Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC). This can be done using tablet PCs and software (suitably upgraded) made available to state rural development departments for conducting the SECC. Aajeevika community resources persons can assist in this survey.

Such an exercise is needed so that the SRLM can fix district, block and GP wise targets for mobilisation, job fairs, IEC etc. and also to meaningfully assess proposals submitted by PIAs. SRLMs will be provided funding by MoRD for this from the Aajeevika Skills budget at the rate of up to 1 % of total project cost paid to PIAs in the state in a year. SRLMs will have to submit details (in the form of a project) and

secure EC approval to become eligible to receive this amount. This is not the same as the skill requirement assessment that PIAs are required to do in the catchment area of the project.

3.2.1.2 Job Mela

Job melas are to be organized by the SRLM (either directly or with the help of PIAs) at the block and GP level to the extent possible. This should bring potential employers and local youth face to face. These melas should be organised with due care by adopting Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) developed for the purpose. These should inter alia involve registration and counselling for youth, due diligence with respect to employers (only those with a good track record should be allowed to participate) and tracking of placement outcomes for one year. These fairs are primarily meant for those who have employable skills acquired without participating in the training programs funded under Aajeevika Skills. However this should not prevent those already trained from using these job melas to improve their job prospects. Funding for this is available from the Aajeevika Skills budget of MoRD up to Rs. 50,000/- per job fair at GP level (provided 100 candidates are placed)and Rs. 1.00 lakh per fair at block level (provided 200 candidates are placed). SRLMs will have to obtain EC approval for a project that details how they propose to spend this money before these funds can be disbursed.

3.2.1.3 Information Education and Communication (IEC)

Appropriate awareness and publicity campaigns are to be conducted using local and national electronic/print media, road shows, nukkad nataks etc. Particular attention needs to be given to SC, ST and minority pockets in the rural areas of the state. This should be used for mobilising and selecting beneficiaries and also to bring about awareness about the program amongst both candidates and employers. The programme website and tracking system has also to be kept operational. Funding for this activity is available from the Aajeevika Skills budget of MoRD at the rate of up to 1.5 % of the project training cost paid to PIAs in the state in

a year. SRLMs will have to obtain EC approval for a project that details how they propose to spend this money before these funds can be disbursed.

3.2.1.4 Migration Support Centres (MSC)

In many cases Aajeevika Skills training and placement involves training rural youth and placing them in jobs away from their native districts or even states. SRLMs should therefore consider opening MSCs in concentrations where a large number of those trained in their state are working. The MSCs should also be opened within the State to support women from S.C/S.T communities who migrate for work. This is different from the finishing and work readiness centres that PIAs are required to operate. Here activities such as alumni support, accommodation assistance, counselling services, periodic get togethers and networking events with employers, local newsletters, coordination with local civil and police administration etc. are to be undertaken. Funding for this is available from the Aajeevika Skills budget of MoRD at the rate of up to Rs. 10,00,000/- per centre per year. The opening of the centres would be part of the AAP/project as cleared by EC of MoRD. The protocols for setting up and managing a MSC shall be notified by the Ministry.

3.2.1.5 Alumni support

Each SRLM should have a clear Aajeevika Skills alumni development strategy. These should include:

i.   Post placement facilitation in the post tracking phase i.e. after one year of training
ii.   Strategies for improving retention and facilitating career progression
iii. Networking opportunities including with employers
iv.   News letters
v.   Discussion board
vi.   Long term tracking
vii. Annual events
viii. Electronic job market
ix.   Facilitate further skilling through convergence
x.   Linking to social security and other schemes

Funding for this is available from the Aajeevika Skills budget of MoRD at the rate of up to 1.5 % of the project training cost paid to PIAs in the state in a year. SRLMs will have to obtain project approval from the EC of MoRD to be able to access this resource.

3.2.1.6 Capacity building

Skill development and placement is a new and emerging area for most states. It is therefore important that substantial investments are made to build capacity at all levels. These include capacity building for SRLM staff, PIA staff and trainers.

For State Rural Livelihood Mission

Sensitization workshops and preliminary training sessions should be organised by States as soon as the state skills team has been recruited. These workshops can be facilitated by NIRD and may inter alia include:

i.   Preparation of SPIP and AAP
ii.   Readiness conditions for AAP
iii. Protocols for monitoring projects, AAP, SSP and existing MSPs
iv.   Strategy for implementation and key non-negotiables
v.   Protocols for selection of PIAs
vi.   Protocols for pre sanction field appraisal
vii. Audit practices and transparency norms
viii. Protocols for inspection and compliance monitoring of Aajeevika Skills training centres
ix.   Steps involved in expenditure verification of PIA accounts
x.   Use of MIS to undertake fortnightly monitoring of PIA performance
xi.   Quality audit of class room transactions using CCTV footage
xii. Enhancing the Aajeevika Skills brand by standardising the look and feel of Aajeevika Skills training centres and the quality of training therein
xiii. Operation of MoRDs workflow driven internet enabled Aajeevika Skills ERP platform.

For staff of PIAs

Capacity development of PIAs both current and prospective is an important function of

the SRLM. The purpose of this is to ensure that there is clarity on how to apply, how to train, how to place and how to retain so as to be in compliance with Aajeevika Skills protocols. The Aajeevika Skills strategy is supportive supervision and not merely fault finding. SRLM should be in a position to identify likely mistakes and take pre-emptive action so that common mistakes are avoided and the larger objective of enabling poor and vulnerable youth from rural areas to access opportunities from India's formal sector is not compromised. The capacity building exercise should include not only workshops for senior management, but also for PIA staff who prepare project proposals and are in charge of running training centres and ensuring quality of class room transactions. Facilitation should also be provided for PIAs to access state government infrastructure that have potential for more intensive use such as evening sessions in schools, ITIs etc.

Certification of Master trainers

The quality of trainers is an important driver for the success of the Aajeevika Skills program. SRLMs should therefore invest considerable energy and resources to ensure that trainers deployed by PIAs have the requisite knowledge, skills and attitude to deliver quality training programs that result in quality placements, high retention and sustainable career progression. This can be achieved by PIAs recruiting and deploying master trainers as part of their Q teams. These master trainers should be put in charge of a number of training centres and be responsible for the quality of training as well as the record of placement, retention and career progression of trainees coming out of centres assigned to them. Master trainers can evaluate the quality of training at each training centre by reviewing CCTV footage, visiting centres, looking at test results and retention rates of trainees from each training centre. They should organise periodic workshops for trainers who are found wanting in specific knowledge, skills or attitude. This would also require the creation and maintenance of a data base of trainers for each trade and tracking of different aspects of their performance. The Master trainers

recruited by PIAs will be trained and certified in a phased manner by NIRD either on its own or through agencies appointed by it.

Capacity enhancement of the PIAs universe

The capacity requirement to meet the skilling targets for the next 10 years is immense. While a substantial part will come from growth and capacity development of existing PIAs, the development of new PIAs by encouraging institutions engaged in rural development, education and large employers to take up skilling as a new or supplementary venture will need to be given a specific thrust.

Capacity Building through Resource Institutions

Different states are in different stages of implementation of Aajeevika Skills. It would therefore be advisable to designate a few institutions of excellence as state and national resource institutions for Aajeevika Skills. These institutions can then be used both as technical support centres and as training centres. GOI would designate resource institutions whose assistance SRLMs can avail of.

Funding pattern

Funding for capacity building activities is available to SRLMs from the Aajeevika Skills budget of MoRD at the rate of up to 3 % of the total approved action plan/ year programme of Aajeevika Skills. Funds will be released to SRLMs on the basis of project proposals approved by the EC.

3.2.1.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a critical component of Aajeevika Skills. This is particularly so because the program is run as a partnership between MoRD, SRLMs and both private and public agencies. There are two aspects to this. One is monitoring. The second is impact assessment and evaluation.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a continuous measurement of progress (quantity and quality) while the

training is on-going. This involves checking and measuring progress, analysing the situation and reacting to new events, opportunities, and issues. Monitoring of an Aajeevika Skills project needs to be done by the PIA, by the SRLM and by MoRD. NIRD will develop effective monitoring framework and capacitate SRLMs, PIAs and MoRD to build effective Aajeevika Skills monitoring systems. This would involve interventions to:

i. Establish distinct high level Quality teams (Q teams) within the PIA and SRLM that will monitor all steps required to be taken. These include:
   a. Beneficiary identification
   b. Beneficiary mobilisation and selection
   c. Trainer
   d. Training
   e. Certification
   f. Placement
   g. Retention
   h. Career progression
   i. Alumni support
ii. Determine key performance indicators for each process(mobilisation, training, placement, retention to career progression)
iii. Specify who and what needs to be monitored (PIA performance, program performance, quality of internal systems and processes, performances of monitoring agencies)

Concurrent Evaluation in Aajeevika Skills is done through:

i. Fortnightly review of the PIAs web site and issuing advisories on shortfalls or deviations with respect to performance targets. This is to be done by the SRLM or by the Technical Support Agency (TSA). PIAs are required to ensure that the daily status of geo – tagged time stamped attendance of both trainers and trainees are available on their web site as is the daily status of all equipment, teaching aids and consumables. Trainee wise details of tests and quizzes administered along with questions and answers and marks should also be available for inspection on the web site.

ii. Monthly inspection of each training centre by the Q team of the PIA. During these inspections the Q team will use protocols developed by NIRD for this purpose and post the results on their web site along with weekly updates on compliance by centre managers and individual trainers. It has to be ensured that the Q teams are of very high quality and have the training to be quality inspectors. They should not be involved in the implementation of the programme. Each Aajeevika Skills training centre will have CCTVs installed in the lab and class room, footage from which is to be reviewed during these inspections to ensure that the quality of the classroom interaction is of a requisite level.

iii. Bi-monthly inspection of each training centre by the SRLM or its TSA. During these inspections the information provided on the web site of the PIA will be verified including the inspection notes and compliance of the PIAs Q team.

iv. Once in three months the TSA will also inspect a number of randomly chosen training centres chosen using 'lot quality assurance sampling (LQAS)[9] standards approved by NIRD. At these inspections the veracity of the inspection notes uploaded by the SRLM or its TSA as well as the Q team of the PIA will be checked. Findings and status of compliance of these inspections will form the basis for improving the quality of the programme.

v. PIAs using internet enabled accounting software to manage their funds and using this to provide view only access to SRLM or its TSA. Voucher level data should also be available through this. PIA will use a singly designated bank account to receive and make all payments of Aajeevika Skills funds. This account will be mapped on to Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (CPSMS) and view only rights will be given to the SRLM and the TSAs. Financial monitoring of projects required for assessing fund release readiness conditions will be done using bank account details on CPSMS and accounting

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[9] See http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2912491/ for a description on why it is important to use LQAS.

details on the online software. Once in three month visits to physically check the veracity of the online accounts will also be undertaken by the SRLM and the TSA. During the physical check of accounts, the financial pass through to the beneficiaries such as a) The food and transportation allowances, b) Post placement allowances and c) Payment to trainers, master trainers and Q team members will only be verified. This is expected to result in the audit of almost 70% of the payments to PIAs. Other vouchers will not be subject to scrutiny. A certificate by the PIA will be sufficient. The ERP of Aajeevika Skills will contain the accounting package where the PIAs will have dedicated accounts. The PIAs have to maintain their accounting systems within the dedicated accounts. The PIAs will also have to upload their vouchers in their accounts. Till the time the ERP system is operational, the PIAs will send the monthly financial statements by email to TSA/SRLM concerned. Copies of vouchers will be scanned and made available through a "drop box" like facility to be mutually agreed. TSA/SRLM will verify randomly chosen samples of vouchers within 15 days. If no errors are communicated by email to PIA in 20 days, PIAs can assume that the vouchers and accounts submitted are in order. TSA/SRLM will arrange to download and securely store the vouchers and account statements in a secure space.

Impact assessment and evaluation

The success of Aajeevika Skills is dependent on the quality of support and supervision that is provided to each PIA. While concurrent evaluation is expected to deal with issues as they emerge it is also important to take a long range view of the impact of the interventions that are being undertaken. This is best done through independent studies. Impact assessment and evaluation has therefore been identified as an integral part of Aajeevika Skills. SRLMs are expected to commission studies by reputed agencies/ institutions and to act on their findings.

Funding for monitoring and evaluation activities is available from the Aajeevika Skills budget of MoRD at the rate of up to 3.5 % of the project training cost paid to PIAs in the state in a year. SRLMs should obtain approval of the empowered committee in MoRD to access these funds.

3.2.1.8 Staff – Block level and below

An important point of departure in Aajeevika Skills (from other centrally sponsored schemes) is the treatment of costs of professionals at the block level and below as program costs and not admin costs. Highly motivated and competent staff is critical for the success of Aajeevika Skills. It is expected that there would be a dedicated full time block program manager for skills as well as a number of Community Resource Persons (CRP). Funding for professionals deployed at the block level and below is available from the Aajeevika Skills budget of MoRD at the rate of up to Rs. 3.5 lakhs per year per block. The approval of the EC of MoRD will be required to access these funds.

3.2.1.9 Administration costs

Any other administrative expense of SRLM relating to skills including staff costs and office expenditure at State and district level over and above the above mentioned line of activities and cost structure shall be met from the 5% Administrative cost allotted to State Governments under NRLM on a proportionate basis. It is expected that the SRLM will use these funds to deploy a dedicated full time team for Aajeevika Skills in the state and district. Considering the fact that 25% of all NRLM spending in a State has to be on Aajeevika Skills, it is imperative that the skills team in a State is led by a full time person in the State Headquarters with the rank and powers of a Chief Operating Officer. The team assisting the COO will have to perform the following tasks. The suggested division of work is as follows:

i.   State Program Manager (Mobilisation, Counselling & Job Fairs)
ii. State Program Manager (PIA coordination &development)
iii. State Program Manager (IT &biometrics)

iv. State Program Manager (Finance &proposal examination)

v. State Program Manager (Pedagogy &learning management)

vi. State Program Manager (Alumni, Migration support, placement, retention tracking & career progression tracking)

vii. State Program Manager (Inspection, Quality Assurance & Branding)

viii. State Program Manager (Coordination with State Skill Mission and other State Skilling initiatives)

In addition to the above professionals, support staff will also be required at the State and district levels. The minimum salary payable for various positions will be notified by MoRD from time to time.

3.2.2 Activities by PIA and their cost norms

The activities to be undertaken by the PIA are detailed below.

3.2.2.1. Mobilisation, Counselling and Selection

Mobilisation, counselling and selection of candidates are activities to be undertaken before training is undertaken. On the quality of work done at this stage depends the post training placement and retention rates.

3.2.2.1.1 Mobilisation

The quality of candidates mobilised has a significant impact on retention during training as well as in the jobs they are placed in as well career progression. The SRLMs have a crucial role in sensitising local communities and CSOs so as to improve the effectiveness and quality of the mobilisation process.

The mobilisation process can be done from one of the following approaches:

i. The SRLM can identify the area where it wants to implement the project and invites PIAs for formulating projects. The State will have to sensitise the community, GPs and CSOs regarding the scheme. The process for selection of PIAs has to be on the basis of clearly laid out norms which have been conveyed to all the stakeholders. All the steps should be transparent and there should be a feeling in the community that the process was fair.

ii. The PIA can select an area and suggest to State for implementing the programme. Based on the assessment of the State Government of the need for the programme, various steps including awareness generation, mobilisation from within the community and identification of beneficiaries can be carried out.

iii. A hybrid approach combining the elements from both the above approaches can also be adopted.

Actual mobilisation must be done by the PIA in areas identified by SRLM. They should involve institutions of the poor established under Aajeevika as well as GPs. Both GPs and Aajeevika institutions have an important role in ensuring that the skills and placement needs of all eligible persons in all habitations are addressed.

The willingness of the candidate identified after mobilisation to undergo the training programme has to be ascertained. The selection process for identifying the trainees has to be transparent and open to all stakeholders. There is a fine balance to be had between aspiration, eligibility and aptitude. While all residents have a right to be considered, it could well mean that not all those who are considered for a particular trade are selected. This is acceptable, provided records are maintained that show that aptitude tests did not indicate a match between aspiration and potential or the aspirant was not eligible. The fact that PIAs have to ensure that at least 75% of those trained are placed should be motivation enough for them to ensure that inclusion errors are minimised. GPs and Aajeevika institutions have to ensure that exclusion errors are minimised. They also have to validate the income potential of placements made.

PIAs shall give priority in mobilizing and selecting candidates identified as focus/special groups in these guidelines. They should also adopt a GP

saturation model while mobilising. This serves two purposes.

i. It ensures that none of the residents who are desirous of being skilled and placed are left out from being considered.

ii. It allows both parents and candidates to support each other during training and placement. This is especially important if training or placement happens to be in a location distant from their place of residence.

3.2.2.1.2 Counselling

Candidate counselling should provide information to prospective trainees on the nature of work in the sector/trade, availability of jobs, deliverables by the employer, entitlements, growth prospects and risks involved. This is aimed at helping both candidates and parents make informed choices and to match aptitude with aspirations. Counselling would be done mainly by PIAs, within frameworks developed by SRLMs, which may include creation of on-job counselling sources as well as Job Melas.

3.2.2.1.3 Selection

Selection is the stage after counselling. A list of those selected on the basis of aptitude tests (psychometric and others) and counselling (by trained counsellors) is prepared and uploaded on the designated MIS. It will be the case that not all candidates who are mobilised attend counselling and not all who attend counselling are finally selected. While it should be ensured that all those desirous of being skilled and placed are considered and put through counselling and aptitude tests, it is possible that not all will be found to have the aptitude required for the training program being organised by that particular PIA. These cases should be separately identified and taken on a state data base for follow up by the SRLM so that these persons get a chance to enrol for another trade with the same or another PIA in the not too distant future.

3.2.2.2 Training

The quality of training is influenced by the quality of: infrastructure at the training centres, trainers, content, training methods, finishing and work readiness inputs, assessment and certification. There are a number of steps that the PIA needs to take with respect to each of these. These are explained below.

3.2.2.2.1 Infrastructure

The following are the important aspects to be borne in mind with respect to infrastructure in an Aajeevika Skills training centre.

Aajeevika Skills training centres should have the prescribed:

i. Furniture, layout, colour scheme and signage – important for establishing the Aajeevika Skills brand

ii. Lab, classroom and IT facilities

iii. Training aids

iv. Geo tagged time stamped biometric attendance facility for both trainers and trainees

v. Fire fighting equipment

vi. First aid, hygiene, drinking water, canteen and washroom facilities

vii. Internet and email access of prescribed speed on all IT equipment using which all trainees can check their emails and browse the internet

viii. Access control facilities

ix. Power back up

x. Projection and copying equipment

xi. High speed access to the workflow driven, internet enabled ERP of the PIA (and SRLM and MoRD when ready)

xii. CCTV recording facilities in classroom, labs and common areas.

Before the PIA is allowed to begin counselling; each training centre should be checked and certified for compliance on each of the above by a designated senior official from the Quality team (Q team) of the PIA. The results from this inspection should be uploaded onto a designated web site or emailed to a designated email of the SRLM or TSA. The SRLM or its appointed TSA should verify the report and email its response within seven calendar days of receipt of the PIA's report. If SRLM or TSA does not communicate its findings from the

verification within seven calendar days, the PIA shall intimate the fact to MoRD with a copy to the SRLM and their TSA through a designated website or email address. PIAs can then begin counselling and training in these centres if they do not hear back in another seven calendar days from the SRLM. In cases of MSP, this will be done by MORD's designated TSAs.

Other aspect to be borne in mind with respect to training centres are detailed below:

i.   Each training centre should have separate space for each domain if proposed to be conducted at the same centre and a dedicated lab. Besides each centre should have a computer lab for IT skills. The space requirement is calculated at a minimum rate of 10 square feet per trainee for theory rooms and 10 square feet per trainee for computer lab.

ii. Training infrastructure may be owned, hired or part of a franchise agreement. State governments are encouraged to make available government buildings that have spare capacity or which can be used after normal working hours. Whatever the case it should be clearly mentioned in the project proposal and carefully costed as part of the approval documents.

iii. Each training centre should remain in existence for at least three months from the date of completion of training or until 75% of those trained have been placed (whichever is later). During this period the training centre should act as a information and facilitation centre for trained beneficiaries and their families.

iv. Mobile centres are not permitted

v.   Non-residential training centres should be located near the homes of trainees. Residential training centres as well as work readiness and finishing centres should be located close to areas with high employment potential. The work readiness and finishing centres will provide residential courses[10].

vi. Where residential training is proposed, own or rented accommodation which is secure, and with prescribed facilities should be available and should be certified as such by the SRLM or its TSA.

vii. In case of skilling in trades that require high Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) for setting up infrastructure (e.g welding), MoRD will set up a cost committee to work out trade wise cost ceilings for these.

3.2.2.2.2 Trainers

It is important to ensure that only those persons are deployed as trainers who have the requisite exposure to the requirement of prospective employers. They should also possess the knowledge, skills and attitude needed to be a good trainer in his/her domain. In the first instance this has to be tested and verified by the Q team of the PIA and verified by the SRLM or its TSA. Knowledge can be tested with the help of written tests and skills can be tested by administering practical tests. However attitude can be tested only in the real class room situation. This is why it has been mandated that all class room and lab sessions should be recorded using CCTV cameras. Samples of the footage drawn using statistically valid techniques should be examined by domain experts in the Q team of the PIA and verified by the SRLM or its TSA every month. Based on this each trainer in the Aajeevika Skills ecosystem should be graded separately for knowledge, skills and attitude. Following each such exercise each trainer should be given a to-do list that has the potential to enhance his/her performance as a trainer. The compliance of each to-do list by the trainer should be verified and taken on record. For this purpose a database of all trainers in the Aajeevika Skills ecosystem should be maintained and their performance tracked using their Aajeevika Skills registration id and by linking PIA's ERP and MoRD's Aajeevika Skills ERP when it is rolled out. This database should be open to all Aajeevika Skills stakeholders. Trainees should also be required to give marks for each session of each trainer. This should be collected at the end of each week. The results from these should inform the choice of

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[10] Details are provided in section 3.2.2.2.5

video footage samples for quality testing. The placement, retention and career progression of trainees trained by each trainer should also be mapped and monitored by the Q team of the PIA and verified by the SRLM or its TSA. Consistently underperforming trainers should be administered remedial measures and if there is no improvement, their services should be terminated. Similarly trainees should also be rated by trainers at the end of each session and administered tests and quizzes from time to time. The results from these and video footage should be monitored by the Q team of the PIA. Trainees showing poor learning outcomes should be provided remedial sessions and ways found to improve his/her competency. Class room performance, results of tests and quizzes, placement success, retention, career progression, trainee selection practices and trainer quality should be correlated and follow up action taken to improve quality.

3.2.2.2.3 Content

Course content should be in tune with the requirement of industry/trade. This is to be certified by the employer if the training is for captive employment. In all other cases it should be certified by National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) or Sector Skills Council (SSC) or any other agency notified for the purpose by MoRD. In special cases certification by nationally acknowledged proprietary training brands will also be considered provided it has been approved by MoRD. Other important aspects are:

i. Training and course content should facilitate learning by rural poor youth who may not have exposure to English.

ii. There should be mandatory modules on soft skills, communication and IT.

iii. Mixed media modules, interactive pedagogy which includes games, role plays should be used. Curriculum and daily session plan should be uploaded on the PIAs website and transferred on to http://aajeevikaskills. gov.in.

iv. Adequate practical and on the job training /internship must be incorporated into the training module where necessary.

v. Course material and exercises should be available online so that trainees who wish to use it to revise and improve themselves are able to do so. Keeping in mind the proliferation of mobile based learning opportunities, the development and deployment of mobile phone based content is expected.

3.2.2.2.4 Training Methods

PIAs have to ensure that training is delivered in an innovative and trainee friendly manner with adequate audio visual tools and participatory methods keeping in mind that Aajeevika Skills targets people from poor and vulnerable sections of society. Trainers should be sensitive to these factors. They should be deployed in accordance to the batch size.

3.2.2.2.5 Finishing and work readiness module

PIAs should mandatorily have a finishing and work readiness module as a part of curriculum. It should preferably be done in PIA established finishing and work readiness centres located in places with high concentration of job opportunities. These centres should be staffed by specially trained high quality trainers who are adept at providing inputs that ensure high success rates at placement interviews and post placement retention. These centres should:

i. Run short residential courses typically seven to ten days long. During this training alumni should meet and inspire the current batch. The last few days should be used to bring prospective employers to the centre for on campus recruitment.

ii. Have a dedicated team that helps candidates find suitable accommodation, get access to health care etc.

iii. Provide support for finding alternate jobs in case the initial placement is not successful

iv. Provide counselling and advice on personal issues.

These interventions are expected to improve retention and help trainees make a smooth

transition from their homes to the new work place. A one-time travel cost to the training centres will be allowed based on actuals with a maximum limit of Rs 4500/- per trainee.

3.2.2.2.6 Assessment & Certification

i. Continuous Assessment-Internal and continuous assessment should be an integral part of the course curriculum. This should be in the form of announced and unannounced quizzes, assignments and other types of tests. The questions asked, answers given and marks obtained by each trainee should available in the password protected area of the PIAs web site. This will be used by the PIAs own independent quality team when it makes monthly visits to each training centre. During these visits each centre and each trainer will be marked and ranked using a score card developed by NIRD. These marks will be verified during bi-monthly inspections of each training centre by the SRLM or its TSA as well as by NIRD/NABARD Consultancy (NABCONS). The results of PIAs own quality inspections is to be made available on the PIAs web site as it is a list of action points from each visit and details of compliance on each.

ii. Third party certification-Independent certification and assessment by third party agencies of both curriculum and the skill, knowledge and attitude level of each trainee as acceptable to the industry or employer is mandatory. This is to ensure that Aajeevika Skills pass outs are of a high standard and are eagerly sought after by employers. The names and details of the certificates and the assessment agencies shall be mentioned in the project proposal. These should include only those agencies that have been empanelled by NCVT/SSC/notified by MoRD in the case of skills and NIOS in the case of school bridge courses for school drop outs.

iii. Own certification in cases of established brands - Own certification in cases of established brands can be used provided it

has been approved by MoRD in advance.

3.2.2.3 Placement

While every effort is to be made to ensure that trainees get jobs that match their aspirations and aptitude, a minimum placement of 75%[11] of trained candidates is a non-negotiable in Aajeevika Skills. Going forward an assessment will be made to determine whether different trades should have different minimum rates of placements. Placement for this purpose is defined as continuous employment for a minimum of three months. The period of continuous employment need not be with the first employer. However the trainee should have worked and received payment for three continuous months, proof of which can either be in the form of a salary slip or a certificate indicating salary paid signed by the employer and salary received by the person placed along with a bank statement.

Aajeevika Skills recognises the following type of placements:

i. Captive placement- PIAs having their own requirement train and absorb the trained persons in their own organisations. PIAs submitting projects for captive placement should submit details of their own manpower requirement based on a realistic estimate of current needs. Captive placement for a second batch of trainees will not be allowed, if more than 50 % of Aajeevika Skills youth placed with the same organisation has left within a span of six months. This is being insisted so as to minimize the danger of an "attrition based" placement model.

ii. Placement providing jobs having regular monthly wages at or above the minimum wages: the proof of regular wage employment is demonstrated by the salary slip from the Human Resources department of the organization. In case the organization does not have a HR department, certificate issued by the employer indicating wages paid and

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[11] For trades requiring capital expenditure, MoRD will notify the differential rates.

counter signed by the employee along with the bank statement indicating that wages have been paid by crossed demand draft or money transfer will demonstrate proof of regular wage employment.

iii. Placement in government organisations/ with government contractors involved in public service delivery- Placement in public service delivery programs such as National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), MGNREGS etc. and institutions such as PRI, etc. are allowed provided it is continuous and full time and minimum wages is provided and proof of employment is available.

iv. Placement in jobs in foreign countries - Placement in jobs which can provide a minimum salary of Rs.25,000 are permitted. Trainings that have the potential to provide salaries in the above range will only be approved.

3.2.2.4 Cost norms for PIA activities described above.

Aajeevika Skills follows a fixed cost model and supports all PIAs that are willing to undertake skilling and placement according to Aajeevika Skills standards provided they meet certain eligibility conditions. When the number of persons to be trained is in excess of the available resources, project sanction is done on a first come first served basis. It is therefore important that an audit trail is available for verifying date and time of project submission by PIAs. MoRD is establishing an internet based central project submission facility on which PIAs can submit project proposals irrespective of the state in which it is to be implemented. Submission through this will be possible only if certain basic conditions are met by the project proponent.

The cost norms for support to PIAs are detailed below. This has been worked out on the basis of a course of 576 hours duration in case of a three month training only. The cost norms have been worked on the basis of a six day (provision has been provided for two holidays in each month) week with a minimum duration of eight hrs/ day. Therefore the duration of the three month, six month, nine month and 12 month courses will be 576 hours, 1152 hours, 1728 hours and 2304 hours respectively. Aajeevika Skills does not support courses of lesser duration. However considerable flexibility is provided in the organisation of the training, which may be for:

i. A continuous period (six day week)
ii. Weekends (for those with some employment including unskilled employment)
iii. Part time (for those who wish to undergo training outside of normal working hours)

The skilling courses can have provisions for providing On the Job Training (OJT). The maximum permissible days for OJT are 30 days for three month course, 60 days for six month course and 90 days for a nine month course.

Table 1: Unit Training Cost per candidate of basic sub-components under Aajeevika Skills for courses of different duration

S.no.	Item	3 month	6 month	9 month	12 month
1	Training Cost (Rs.)	13696.00	19152.00	23562.00	26602.00
2	Boarding and Lodging (Unit Cost/ day for residential training)				
a	State Headquarters @ Rs 166 per day	14940.00	29880.00	44820.00	59760.00
b	District Headquarters @ Rs 120 per day	10800.00	21600.00	32400.00	43200.00
c	All other locations other than (a) and (b) above @ Rs 75 per day	6750.00	13500.00	20250.00	27000.00
3	Food and To & Fro charges	9000.00	18000.00	270000.00	36000.00
4	Post Placement Support				
a	Placement within District of domicile (Rs 1000 per month for 2 months)	2000.00	2000.00	2000.00	2000.00
b	Placement within State of domicile (Rs 1000 per month for 3 months)	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00
c	Placement outside State of domicile (Rs 1000 per month for 6 months)	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00
5	Uniform cost (cost of one pair is Rs 1000, 2 pairs provided in case of 9 m and 12 m course)	1000.00	1000.00	2000.00	2000.00
6	Minimum wages for placements in India (per month)-Cost to Company (CTC) or minimum wages whichever is higher	6000.00	8000.00	12000.00	15000.00
7	Minimum wages for placements abroad	25000.00	25000.00	25000.00	25000.00

Note: A PIA may claim only one of the costs given in S.No.2 or No.3 while costing for the project.

The training cost includes:
i. Training cost, mobilization of beneficiaries, curriculum, training of trainers, utilities, infrastructure, equipment, teaching aids, raw materials, etc
ii. Assessment & certification
iii. Placement linkage
iv. MIS & Tracking, monitoring, quality control.

The unit costs given are the maximum permissible amounts, the actual amounts will be as per the project proposals submitted and approved by Empowered Committee (EC) MoRD.

In the case of courses having duration between three and 12 months, besides the standard duration of three, six, nine and 12 months, the hourly rates will be used for calculation of the training cost.

The cost of equipments is not an allowable expenditure unless specifically mentioned in the sanction letter. In case of Capital Expenditure on equipment, the PIA may.
a. Purchase equipments with prior approval of EC. In such cases, after project completion, the book value of the equipment shall be

adjusted in the final settlement to the PIA.

b. Purchase equipment at their own cost and account it as internal rental /leasing cost in the project.

A one-time travel cost to the training centre in case of residential training programme will be allowed based on actuals with a maximum limit of Rs 4500.00.

The monitoring cost of the TSA[12] will be @ 1.5% of the total project cost sanctioned to the PIAs. In addition to the above PIAs have to undertake the following support activities for which they will be entitled to additional support as indicated below.

3.2.2.5 Tablet Computers

There is a lot to be gained in providing trainees with an interactive medium to absorb the skills that are imparted. Therefore, there is a provision to provide tablet computers to trainees during the duration of the course. It will also help to enhance the learning experience for the trainee. The PIAs in category 'A' and 'B' will be provided a one-time expenditure of Rs 5000 per trainee for the tablet computers. The results from this intervention shall be studied after one year before extending this facility to category 'C' PIA.

The minimum specification for the tablet computers is given below:

i. **Processor:** 1GHz Single-core   512MB DDR, 4GB eMMC
ii. **Display:** 7" WVGA (800x480)
iii. **Audio:** Stereo headset, MIC, mono speakers
iv. **Camera:** VGA, Fixed Focus, 15fps front camera
v. **Comms:** Wifi 802.11 b/g
vi. **Expansion:** USB 2.0 device/host, memory card
vii. **Power/Battery:** 3000mAh, 5Vdc USB charger

One tablet computer per trainee will be available at each centre. The tablet computer cannot be taken out of the centre. Based on the session plans, interactive learning modules will be loaded into the tablet computer and provided to each trainee.

3.2.2.6 Cash Voucher Scheme

The discussions so far has been on providing skilling and placement services by sanctioning projects to PIAs. The skill voucher scheme adopts a different approach that distinguishes itself by privileging consumer choice. According to this scheme established skill providers who are willing to provide training and 100% placement to Aajeevika Skills beneficiaries are empanelled by the SRLM following a process of due diligence. The list of trades for which they have been authorised is made available to candidates who have expressed their interest and have been shortlisted following a counselling process. Following this candidates approach such empanelled agencies with a skill voucher issued to them and try to secure admission. If they succeed the vouchers are handed over to the skill provider who can cash them from the SRLM once placement (defined as three months' salary slip as evidence of successful placement) is completed.

3.2.2.7 Post Placement Support (PPS)

One of the key lessons from SGSY special projects was that trainees from BPL rural households need support in the first few months of the post placement phase. PPS has to be paid to the trainee in full at the end of each month to the bank account of the working youth on receipt of salary slip. Under no circumstances, should PPS be distributed in cash or kind. PPS money will be released to the PIA as a part of the regular instalment.

Where a PIA is unable to give a placement to a candidate as per the prescribed minimum salaries as in Table 1, such placement shall not be counted as a placement under the Aajeevika Skills and in such a case no claim for PPS shall be eligible.

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[12] The TSA has to provide the UC/ Audited Statement for the funds released to them.

3.2.2.8 Retention Support

It has been observed that those who remain in work for one year are successful in making the transition and very rarely slip back into unemployment. However the process of ensuring a high level of retention requires additional investments that ensure:

i. High quality management
ii. Innovation in course design
iii. Constant updating of training content to keep up with market requirements
iv. Long term relationship with both alumni and employers.
v. Up to date knowledge of the job market.

Additional resources are being made available to the PIA for this at the rate of Rs. 3000/- per person retained in employment for 365 days. Employers can be multiple but total period out of work should not exceed 60 days during the 365 day period since the first placement. PIA will be required to show on their web acknowledgement statements showing salary received signed by those they have placed. They will have to submit a statement by the employer showing details of salary paid to each person to be eligible for this payment.

3.2.2.9 Support for Career Progression

A major challenge of Aajeevika Skills is to assist those placed to progress in their careers. This has been addressed in the form of an additional payment to PIAs at the rate of Rs. 5000/- for every person trained by the PIA who crosses a salary of Rs. 15,000/- per month and holds it for a minimum of 90 calendar days within one year of completion of training. It is envisaged that this will be possible only if the PIA invests in handholding and skill up grading activities after placement. How the PIA proposes to do this should be clearly explained in the project proposal. This

intervention should be separately approved at the time of project sanction for it to be payable when the PIA submits a claim on this account.

3.2.2.10 Enhanced Support for residential training/transport and food

Currently each trainee is paid Rs. 50 per day towards food and transport if they are day scholars. This will be increased based on the location of the hostel/residential facility in State headquarters or District headquarters or any other city/town other than State HQ or District HQ as per cost given in Table 1.

3.2.2.11 Incentives for live distance training

The PIAs have to adopt innovative training methods to ensure that master trainers can reach out to large number of trainees. PIAs are encouraged to adopt studio based interactive training methods of content delivery. An amount of Rs 500/- per candidate will be payable to the PIA if at least 30% of the teaching hours are covered using the live distance training techniques.

3.2.2.12 Counselling for trainees placed in foreign countries

The trainees who are offered placement in foreign countries will be provided counselling sessions. The objective of these sessions is to provide basic information to ease their transition into countries of destination. The information will cover labour rights of destination countries, work place safety, accessing consular services, social norms in the destination countries etc. Besides, assistance to complete medical formalities including health checks will also be provided. An amount of Rs. 10,000/- per trainee will be payable to the PIA for this.

4. Programme Administration

4.1. AAP, SSP & MSP

SGSY Special projects were sanctioned by MoRD directly in favour of PIAs. Many of these projects concerned more than one State. In order to devolve the skills programme to the States, it has been decided to stop funding Multi State Projects (MSPs) forthwith.[13] The States are categorised into two – AAP States and Non AAP States. Both AAP and Non-AAP States will be implementing MSP and SSP. The MSPs are on-going projects which will be allowed to proceed to completion. Both AAP States and Non-AAP States will be allowed to implement SSPs. However, the power to sanction projects will be devolved only to AAP States. They will do so according to an annual action plan approved by the EC in MoRD. The equivalent of this for Non-AAP states is Year Programme. The EC of MORD will sanction SSP projects from Non-AAP States. The Non-AAP States will be assisted to achieve the AAP status by 2014-15.

4.1.1 AAP

States that fulfil the following five conditions are designated as AAP states.
i. Have a full time COO/Programme Manager in charge of skills and placement.
ii. Have a dedicated skills team at the state level to support COO skills.
iii. Have a dedicated skills team at the district and sub district level to support COO skills.
iv. Have a policy that is aligned with the national guidelines on how to appraise new and on-going projects.
v. Have a policy clarifying how Aajeevika Skills PIAs can use spare capacity (men and material) in government institutions and buildings.

The AAP of these states should contain the following:
i. Role and functions of the implementation machinery
ii. State-specific strategies for skill development
iii. Institutional capacity building (existing and proposed)
iv. Detailed proposal for SGA (where required –description of gap in other case)
v. Thematic areas for skilling of poor youth proposed to be undertaken, and rationale for the same (as per SGA)
vi. Corresponding employment opportunities and the means of identifying them
vii. Districts or blocks chosen for implementation and rationale for selection
viii. Mobilisation strategies including:
   a. Strategies for prioritising vulnerable areas and communities
   b. Strategies to increase community involvement in mobilisation, and increasing engagement of the State vis-a-vis the PIA
   c. Strategies for counselling family members and candidates, besides career guidance

ix. Number of youth proposed to be brought into the programme
x. System for selection of training/skilling partners including elaboration of how the fixed cost model will be administered
xi. System for accreditation of courses – content, duration, HR requirement and placement opportunities
xii. System for accreditation/empanelment of individual trainers
xiii. Plan for capacity development of training partners

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[13] North East and UTs are an exception

xiv. Post-placement facilitation and retention strategies including alumni development

xv. Plan for adaptation/augmentation of MIS to cover the needs of monitoring of the project

xvi. System for fund management

xvii. Strategies to ensure that PIAs do not experience negative cash flow eg: by declaring service standards for processing of claims and proposals

xviii. Provision for independent assessment and evaluation of Aajeevika Skills projects

xix. Convergence with the NSDA objectives and operational dovetailing with the State Skills Missions

xx. Strategies to:

   a. Increase responsiveness of programme to market demand and to increase beneficiary choice (i.e., the potential skills recipient)

   b. Increase range of partnerships with industry, CSOs and potential skill providers

The format for submission of AAP can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in.

AAP states approve individual projects without prior clearance from MoRD. They do so using provisions in these guidelines within the boundaries of an AAP approved by the EC in MoRD. MoRD will continue to undertake supportive supervision of these projects with the help of NIRD and NABCONS or any other designated TSA appointed for the purpose. The State and PIA will enter into an MOU (the format for submission of AAP can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills. gov.in). Both states and PIAs will be required to submit compliance reports of advisories issued in the course of supervision from time to time. In addition to these each PIA is required to have dedicated quality teams (Q teams) who inspect training centres each month using protocols issued by MoRD. Besides they are also required to independently test the placement and retention

record reported by the placement team of the PIA via their web site and passed on to the Aajeevika Skills database (when it is ready). The Q team will use 'Lot Quality Assurance Sampling' (LQAS) standards approved by NIRD. Results from these inspections will be checked by the SRLM using its own Q teams or those of its designated technical support agency (TSA). NIRD and NABCONS will also be reviewing the work of the Q teams of the PIA and the SRLM.

4.1.2 Non-AAP

States that do not fulfil AAP criteria are designated as Non-AAP states. Non AAP states like their AAP counterparts need to get their Year Programme approved by the EC in MoRD. This is the equivalent of AAP for Non-AAP States. Additionally they also need to get individual projects approved by the EC in MoRD as notified by the Ministry. Power to approve individual Aajeevika Skills projects will devolve to states as soon as they fulfil the five AAP conditions. All other steps and protocols for program administration and quality control in the case of projects in Non-AAP states are the same as in AAP states.

4.1.3 Multi-State Projects

Traditionally most Aajeevika Skills projects and their SGSY-SP predecessors were sanctioned by MoRD as MSPs. They were also monitored directly by MoRD with the help of TSA with very little involvement of state governments. Going forward, no new MSP will be sanctioned, but helping PIAs bring these projects to an orderly closure is the joint responsibility of both the state and central governments. In this they will be assisted by NIRD and NABCONS the two designated TSAs for Aajeevika Skills. Each state and union territory has been allocated to one of these two agencies. The responsibility to develop protocols and train state and PIA personnel are currently allocated to NIRD. Details of allocation of states between NIRD and NABCONS can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in.

The steps involved in the management of multi-state Aajeevika Skills projects are the same i.e.

i. Workflow driven ERP to be used by PIA for program management including daily reporting from the training centres.

ii. Allowing TSA to monitor progress via an interface with the ERP. TSAs to issue fortnightly advisories to PIA on corrections required if any.

iii. Inspection of training centres by Q teams of PIA

iv. Fresh batches to start only after the training centre has been inspected and certified.

v. Bi-monthly inspection of training centres by TSA and compliance monitoring of action points by centre managers and individual trainers.

vi. Use of score sheets and bound volumes to submit proposals for fund release.

4.2 Steps to be taken by the SRLM in the administration of Aajeevika Skills

The SRLMs are required to undertake a number of activities as described in the earlier chapter. This table lists out these steps and differentiates them with respect to their applicability for SSP, MSP and AAP projects.

Table 2: Steps in the administration of Aajeevika Skills projects for AAP States (SRLM)

No	Activity	Remarks
1	**Establish Team** Establish dedicated teams at the state, district and sub-district level headed by COO/Programme Manager skills.	
2	**Empanel TSA** Complete procurement process and on-boarding formalities for a TSA to assist the SRLM to evaluate proposals and inspect training centres.	
3	**Build IT platform** Establish a skill and placement ERP platform that is internet enabled and work flow driven. Ensure that this is able to pull and push information from the Aajeevika Skills national ERP platform (once it is rolled out).	
4	**Conduct Skill Gap Assessment** Create a state level youth data base using SECC household id by conducting SGAs and placement demand surveys.	This will be an on-going exercise. The AAP need not wait for this to be completed.
5	**Consult Stake holders** Prepare a seven year SPIP in consultation with prospective employers and skill providers in the private and government sectors.	
6	**Consult PIAs** Prepare AAP in consultation with PIAs desirous of implementing Aajeevika Skills projects in the state.	
7	**SPIP & AAP approval** Get the SPIP & AAP approved by the EC of MoRD	

No	Activity	Remarks
8	**Build PIA and SRLM capacity** Organise workshops for SRLM teams and PIA project preparation and Q teams.	
9	**Receive Project Proposals** Arrange to download and process project proposals submitted electronically by PIAs 24X7 round the year. Ensure that there is a clear audit trail that captures time stamp at all stages. The formats for submission of proposals and the url on which proposals shall be submitted shall be notified by MoRD. Till such time URl is notified and the ERP system is in place, the proposals can be sent simultaneously to the dedicated email ids of MORD and SRLM.	
10	**Appraisal** Appraisal of the proposal shall be done by the system and score shall be automatically generated. All applications that score the minimum marks shall qualify for consideration by the PAC. Only in case of "C" category PIA applicants, a field appraisal will be conducted to check the physical existence of the organization at the registered address, capturing the photograph of the institution, verification of the number of employees in the head office.	
11	**Hold PAC meeting** Hold PAC meetings on the 1st Tuesday of each month to consider all projects received by the 2nd Tuesday of the previous month.	
12	**Ensure Supportive Supervision** Review the PIAs regular MIS and online accounting MIS each fortnight and issue advisories in case of deviations or failure to meet monthly targets.	
13	**Achieve targets** Review compliance by PIA of previous advisories issued by SRLM and MoRDs TSA.	
14	**Review the PIAs monthly targets for training candidates** Conduct a review of the monthly targets for training candidates (category wise) assigned to the PIAs. In case of shortfall, PIAs should make plans to address the gap and ensure that annual targets are achieved. Where there is shortfall in achievement of the targets fixed for the project for SC/ST, Minorities and women up to 5% in each category, the PIA shall submit a proposal seeking relaxation from the PAC. In case the proposal for relaxation is not accepted by the PAC, then proportionate deductions shall be made from the subsequent releases for the shortfall in the assigned targets.	

No	Activity	Remarks
15	**Ensure Quality** Conduct once in two month quality audit of each training centre and previously reported placements.	
16	**Ensure that PIA receives instalments within 30 days of becoming eligible** This would be possible only if the decision to release funds is taken solely on the basis of well published scoring systems that the PIA, TSA and the SRLMs internal finance division buys into. SRLM will have to use the MIS to predict the date by when the PIA would be submitting their claim for instalment and ensure that the concurrent monitoring both physical and financial are completed before that date. This is possible if the PIA has a detailed real time physical and financial MIS and exposes this over the internet to the TSA and the SRLM.	
17	**Monitoring of Retention** Aajeevika Skills has progressed from being a program that provides skilling to one that also ensures placement. Retention is the new goal.	
18	**Organise Job Melas** Bring together both prospective employers who have a good track record and rural youth who have either employable skills or can be trained by the employer at the cost of the employer.	These melas are a good opportunity to test the findings of the SGA and for the SRLM and other PIA's to network with employers.
19	**Establish Migration Support Centres** Many of the jobs in the formal sector are unfortunately available in areas that are distant from the areas where the rural poor reside. Establish support centres where Aajeevika Skills alumni are assisted in: i. Finding accommodation ii. Finding alternate/better paying jobs iii. Sorting out problems with the local administration iv. Dealing with personal issues by providing access to a professional counsellor.	
20	**Establish help lines in the office of the Collector/District Magistrate for Aajeevika Skills women beneficiaries who migrate outside their district** In the case of women beneficiaries who are being placed outside the district, there should be designated mobile phone help line and nodal officers whom they can contact on mobile phone or email in case of a crisis. It will be the duty of the Collector/D.M of the home district to contact the destination district collector either directly or through the State Government to help the women in distress.	

No	Activity	Remarks
21	**Establish an Aajeevika Skills alumni program** Organise programs that nurture and encourage Aajeevika Skills alumni. Newsletters, annual get together, recognition for high achievers, assistance in finding better paying jobs, convergence with other government programs for higher education are some of the activities that can be taken through this.	
22	**Convergence with State Missions for skill development** Explore convergence opportunities with State Missions for skill development as well as various departments. Some of the programmes have similar objectives and target group as Aajeevika Skills and provides opportunities to develop synergies.	
23	**Setting standards for training centres using a ranking system** A ranking system for the training centres will be operationalized to ensure quality standards. The training centres need to maintain minimum standards, infrastructure and technical expertise as detailed in guidelines. In order to bring elements of competition between the PIAs, a system for ranking training centres based on a commonly agreed criteria will also be put in place. e.g. The centres can be ranked as one star, two star, three star etc. This ranking will vary after each inspection.	
24	**Establish Career Guidance Centres** Setting up Career Guidance centres at various levels, both at district and block. These will channelize candidates into training programs, apprenticeships and jobs. The services will include counselling to potential candidates, linking candidates to service providers etc.	
25	**Providing information about Aajeevika Skills in public domain** All information related to Aajeevika Skills has to be placed in public domain, especially by maintaining web site where information is updated regularly. This will help the public to take informed decisions as well as bring in transparency.	
26	**Conduct training and capacity building programme for GP functionaries** Regular training of GP functionaries to build their capacity to actively participate and play a pro-active role in various activities related to Aajeevika Skills.	

Non AAP States

The Steps 2,4,5,18,19 from the table are not applicable for non AAP States. The Steps 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12-17, 20-26 are similar to those applicable for AAP States from the table above. For the remaining Steps, the following are applicable:

Step 7: Year Programme approval – The Non-AAP states have their Year Programme (YP) which has to be approved by the EC of MoRD.

Step 11: Forward proposals to MoRD: Forward to MoRD by the 3rd Tuesday of each month, those proposals for which:

The state government is willing to meet the relevant state share in full (25% or 10%)

i. There is a record of receipt by the 1st Tuesday of the month
ii. The PIA has not been black listed by the state government
iii. The TSA appointed by MoRD has found the proposal to be complete in all respects.

MoRD will hold EC meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. The EC will consider all cases received in MoRD by the 3rd Friday of the previous month. This means that within one month of the proposal reaching at SRLM, it will be taken up by MoRD. Given that TSA needs one month it is expected that a PIA will know the result of its proposal within 90 days of submission.

MSP Projects

The Steps 1-11, 17-26 from the table for AAP States are not applicable for MSP projects. The Steps 12-16 are similar to those applicable for AAP States.

4.3 Steps in MoRD

Aajeevika Skills is a partnership between the Central and State governments and PIAs who implement them on the ground. This section describes the activities and time lines for processing cases in MoRD.

Table 3: Steps in the administration of Aajeevika Skills projects-MoRD

Step	AAP	Remarks
1	**Build SRLM Capacity** Once the state, district and sub-district skills teams have been put in place MoRD will assist the SRLM to run capacity building workshops for them.	
2	**Build PIA capacity** MoRD with the help of NIRD and other agencies will organise periodic workshops for members of staff of PIAs on different aspects of Aajeevika Skills particularly application, accounting and quality processes.	
3	**Build TSA capacity** TSAs have an important role in the administration of Aajeevika Skills. These relate to desk and field appraisal, training centre quality audit and concurrent monitoring of physical and financial parameters of each project. MoRD with the help of other agencies will organise periodic workshops to help build the capacities of TSAs engaged in supporting MoRD and the SRLMs.	

Step	AAP	Remarks
4	**Standardise protocols** With the help of TSAs finalise scoring sheets and protocols for appraising proposals for new projects and fund release in on-going ones. Also notify quality assurance protocols particularly at the training centre and work place.	
5	**Prepare SPIP and AAP** Help SRLMs in all AAP states to prepare seven year SPIPs and AAPs for skills and placement by the 1st of December each year.	
6	**Desk Appraisal** Complete desk appraisal of all SPIPs and AAPs by the 1st of January each year.	
7	**SPIP, AAP and AP approval** Approve all SPIPs, AAPs and YP (for non AAP states) by convening EC meetings by the 15th of January each year.	
8	**Quality Assurance** Develop protocols and scoring sheets to be used by PIA Q teams, SRLM and TSA for supportive supervision of training centres and placement claims.	
9	**Ensure monitoring** All parameters that need to be met before release of 2nd, 3rd and 4th instalment should be monitored by the TSA or SRLM on a fortnightly basis using the MIS of PIAs and the Aajeevika web site. This is to improve quality and reduce time lost between attainment of readiness conditions and payout to PIAs. The score cards for the release of 2nd, 3rd and 4th instalments and closure can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in.	
10	**Improve quality of course material and class room transactions** Work with PIAs and assessment agencies and SSC to improve course material and class room transactions	
11.	**Network with prospective employers** Work with prospective employers with a view to building the Aajeevika Skills brand and to ensure that Aajeevika Skills skilled persons receive a fair deal in their work place.	
12	**Network with prospective PIAs and bring more of them into the Aajeevika Skills ecosystem** Improve outreach to PIAs both existing and prospective and ensure that there is a substantial increase in project approvals.	
13	**National database of trainers** MoRD will built and maintain a national database of trainers and rank them on clearly defined criteria.	

Non AAP States

The Step 1 from the table above is not applicable for non AAP States. The Steps 2-6, 8-13 are similar to those applicable for AAP States. For the remaining steps, the following are applicable:

Step 6: Desk Appraisal: Complete physical verification of all "C" category PIAs within 30 days of receipt of proposals.

Step 7: Project Approval: Convene meeting of the EC on the 1st Tuesday of each month to consider all proposals that:

i. Have been received from the TSA by the last Tuesday of the previous month
ii. Have been forwarded by the State Government by the last Thursday of the previous month with the assurance to co-fund to the extent of state share of Aajeevika Skills.

MSP projects

The Step 1-8, 11 & 12 from the table above for AAP States is not applicable for MSP projects. The Steps 10,13 are similar to those applicable for AAP states. For the remaining steps, the following is applicable:

Step 9: Ensure Monitoring
All parameters that need to be met before release of 2nd, 3rd and 4th instalment should be monitored by the TSA or SRLM on a fortnightly basis using the MIS of PIAs and the Aajeevika web site. This is to improve quality and reduce time lost between attainment of readiness conditions and payout to PIAs.

Extension of Project tenure: Every PIA is expected to complete the project within the approved tenure. However, extension of a project tenure may be considered on a case-to-case basis as given below:

i. If the extension is for a period of less than three months, the approval maybe accorded at the level of Joint Secretary with the concurrence of Integrated Finance Division (IFD).

ii. If the extension is for a period less than six months but greater than three months, the approval maybe accorded at the level of Additional Secretary (RD) with the concurrence of IFD.
iiii. If the extension is for a period more than six months, the approval may be accorded by EC.

4.4 Support Structures at the National Level

4.4.1 National Advisory Group

A National Advisory Group (NAG) will be constituted to support MoRD with inputs, feedback and suggestions to improve the quality and scope of Aajeevika Skills. NAG will be drawn from among Policy Planners, other Central Ministries, State Governments, Industry, Academia, Civil Society, industry organisations and International Organisations. The activities for the NAG are the following:

Identify policy and implementation issues related to Aajeevika Skills at National, State and Local level covering process and procedure, systems and institutions.

Identify issues related to convergence with other skill development initiatives of Central and State Governments.

Identify and disseminate best practises related to Aajeevika Skills across States.

4.4.2 Empowered Committee (EC)

The Empowered Committee (EC) of NRLM will perform following activities in case of AAP states
i. Approve the SPIP, AAP and YP of the states.
ii. Review the programme, suggest studies etc.
iii. Approve innovative project proposals from State provided they meet the core principles detailed in these guidelines.
iv. Approve project proposals for the special groups. The cost norms for these projects will also be approved on a case to case basis to account for the specific needs of these groups.

v. Approve the proposals for setting up of MSC in the States.

vi. Approve State specific proposals if it is adhering to the overall core principles and cost norms in these guidelines.

The EC will also consider project proposals from non AAP states that have passed desk and field scrutiny and have been forwarded by the respective state government along with a commitment to meet the relevant state share.

4.5 Steps a PIA should take to access and administer Aajeevika Skills resources

PIAs who wish to become an Aajeevika Skills PIA will have to participate in Aajeevika Skills training programs and submit proposals for financial support. This section describes the steps involved depending on whether the project is to be implemented in an AAP state or a non AAP state or whether it is for an on-going MSP.

Table 4: Steps in the administration of Aajeevika Skills projects-PIA

Step	AAP
1	**Undertake Skill Gap Analysis(SGA)** Though there may be national level skill gap assessments and GP level youth databases, the PIA should make its own assessment and take responsibility for it because once a project is sanctioned subsequent change of targets will not ordinarily be possible.
2	**Identify Prospective Employers** Following the SGA or before it the PIA should tie up with prospective employers the number of people they need for each trade and the kind of knowledge, skill and attitude they require in their employees.
3	**Attend PIA training programs** Both the SRLM and NIRD will be organising training programs for PIA staff on project preparation and quality monitoring. PIA staff should attend these programs to ensure that they are able to submit proposals complete in all respects and conduct quality audit of training centres and work placements.
4	**Prepare and Submit Project Proposals** Project proposals should be prepared using Aajeevika Skills formats and submitted online to the SRLM. The formats for submitting proposals can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in. While submitting projects, the PIA shall clearly provide cost estimates as for their project under the following sub heading a. Boarding & Lodging charges in case of residential courses, and Food and To & Fro charges in case of non-residential courses. b. Post placement support c. PC tablet d. Uniforms e. distance learning (ii) Costs accruing to the Trainers a. Salary for Q Team b. Salary for Trainers

Step	AAP
5	**Respond to Queries**
	Quickly respond to queries that the SRLM may have. Online submission is the preferred mode. Till such time that this facility is not available emails may be used.
6	**Text of the MOU**
	Once the PAC in the SRLM approves the proposal, the PIA will have to enter into an MOU with the SRLM. The text of this should be agreed before the PAC meeting so that the MOU is executed within 48 hours of the PAC minutes being issued. The cost of the stamp paper for executing the MOU will be borne by the PIA.
	A month wise plan indicating the number of people (category wise including SC/ST/Minority/Women) to be trained over the entire project duration has to be provided by the PIA as part of the project proposal and will be part of the MOU.
7	**Execute MOU**
	Within 48 hours of the PAC meeting minutes being issued the MOU between SRLM and PIA (in case a project is granted by AAP State) or a MOU between SRLM, TSA and PIA (in case a project is granted in a Non AAP State by MoRD), should be signed. The format of model MOU can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in.
8	**Establish Training Centres and get it certified by SRLM or TSA**
	Establish training centres and labs for practical training. Ensure that trainers have the required knowledge, skills and attitude to be Aajeevika Skills trainers. Before going to the next step the Q team of the PIA should inspect and certify the training centre using protocols specified by NIRD.
	Where women trainers are being trained, there should be at least one women manager/trainer.
9	**Mobilise**
	Use a GP saturation approach. Offer counselling services to all residents between the ages 18 to 35 who have been identified as being poor. In the case of PTGs the upper age limit is 45 years.
	Special groups such as manual scavengers, victims of human trafficking etc. may be allowed to enrol if they are above 16, provided they become 18 by the time they finish training including on the job training if any.
10	**Counsel and select**
	Aajeevika Skills beneficiaries come from poor families and often have very little idea about the scope and nature of work in each sector. It is therefore important that beneficiaries and their parents receive good quality counselling.

Step	AAP
11	**Ensuring Quality Training and Placement** i. Use geo-tagged, time stamped biometric attendance at start and end of each training day ii. Online inventory check each morning when training centre opens and closes iii. Periodic quizzes and tests with safeguards to prevent impersonation. Publish results in the PIA MIS and organise remedial classes for those who score poorly iv. Install video audio recorders in each classroom and labs. Ensure that the PIA's Q team reviews these recordings each month and scores each trainer. Use these results to run remedial classes for trainers v. Ensure timely payment of allowance to trainees for daily food, transport/lodging vi. Ensure adequate and timely payment of trainer remuneration vii. Ensure that monthly and end of project targets for SC/ST, minorities and women are met viii. Ensure that advisories issued by PIAs own Q teams, SRLM and TSA of MoRD are complied with by individual trainers and training centre managers ix. Ensure that the placement data reported on the PIAs web site and passed on to MoRD is credible x. Work with employers to ensure that employers who accept Aajeevika Skills alumni provide all legal benefits that are due to them xi. Ensure that trainees are tracked for at least a year after placement. (The PIAs performance in post placement tracking for a year after placement will be variable for assessment during subsequent submission of proposals).
12	**Work Readiness and Employability training Centres** Establish residential centres that provide work readiness and employability training in major centres of employment for residents from the project state. Invite prospective employers for campus placement interviews and tests. Support alumni with information on accommodation and opportunities for alternate jobs. Also provide laisoning services with the local administration.
13	**Conduct Counselling session for trainees after placement** The trained candidates who are placed in various jobs, usually in cities would have problems in adjusting to a new environment, both in the work place and outside. PIAs have to conduct counselling sessions with the candidates, especially the women candidates, to help them in adapting to the new environment.

All the above points are required for the SSPs. However, the points 1-7 are not applicable for MSP.

4.6 State Perspective Implementation Plan (SPIP)

The SPIP would need to project skilling needs in the medium term (seven years) covering the number of youth to be trained and placed, the trades and sectors within which the trainings need to be done, and the areas for innovation and for special projects. Baseline information from SGA, market scans and surveys, literature reviews etc. would need to be collated to undertake a situation analysis of the scenario in the State for skilling the poor. The situation analysis would be expected to capture the various categories of poor youth and vulnerable communities to be brought into skilling programmes. It should be able to identify growth areas, challenges faced by the State in enhancing the employability of poor youth and vulnerable communities. It should also be able to map potential capabilities, looking at the poor as productive resource, and map their potential for gainful employment. The SPIP should articulate the strategies to achieve the projected outputs including for

i. Capability development and augmentation of service providers in the area of skilling
ii. Interventions for local economic development through skilling solutions
iii. Interventions for safe migration and support services
iv. Development of systems for sustained skill interventions
v. Enabling greater infrastructural access/availability and innovative rent sharing
vi. Enhancing access of and outreach to the most vulnerable among the poor
vii. Areas of long term engagement of the CBOs of the poor and their capacitation for the same
viii. Long term mobilisation, including participatory identification of the poor

ix. Convergence platforms and their continued engagement
x. Employer engagement and opportunities for skill augmentation and reskilling
xi. Projects that target formalization of informal sector employment (payment terms, protection and benefits, credible tracking of retention)
xii. Quality management including certification of courses, assessment and monitoring
xiii. Long term strategies to track and ensure retention
xiv. Institutional arrangements for transparency including proactive disclosures
xv. Institutional arrangements/partnerships for technical assistance, capacity building and alumni management

The template for SPIP preparation can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in. It is expected that the States would submit their SPIP in the year following their designation as AAP.

4.7 PIA – Categories and Criteria

The following entities can apply to become a PIA under Aajeevika Skills provided they are registered under any Indian Trust Acts or any State Society Registration Act or any State Co-operative Societies or Multi-State Co-operative Acts or The Companies Act of India 1956:

i. Educational Institutions with their own land and buildings (lease agreement for a duration of more than 20 years is also admissible)
ii. Corporate entities (for captive placement)
iii. Entities that train and place for improved Public Service Delivery
iv. Commercial and not for profit training providers (providing employment elsewhere)
v. Federation of SHGs and cooperative societies
vi. Market leaders running established fee-based skilling programmes which the poor can access through vouchers/scholarships provided under Aajeevika Skills

vii. Government/semi government/ autonomous government organizations at the State and National Level.

Category of PIAs and corresponding project sizes and project periods for which they will be eligible under the Aajeevika Skills is as follows:

Table 5: PIA categories

No	Category of PIA	Eligibility criteria	Project size & period (Rs.)
1	Category A	Completion of three or more projects under Aajeevika Skills (or SGSY-SP) or training of 20000 beneficiaries and providing placement to 75% of trainees during the previous 5 years.	Upto Rs. 50 crore per project (total approved cost including State share). Project period maximum of five years
2	Category B	PIAs who have completed at least one Aajeevika Skills (or SGSY-SP) project in the preceding three years and have fulfilled all the conditions set in the project, and Training institutions who have not implemented Aajeevika Skills (or SGSY-SP) project of the Ministry in last three years, but are well established skills providers (defined as being more than five years old and having annual turnover greater than Rs.15 crore, in each of the last three years) All NSDC partners where NSDC has a stake, either through equity or loan will fall under this category.	Upto Rs. 15 crore per project (total approved cost including State share). Project period maximum of three years
3	Category C[14]	All other PIAs who do not have prior experience in skilling but have under gone PIA orientation course organised by MoRD.	Upto Rs. 5 crore per project (total approved cost including State share). Project period maximum of two years.

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[14] When institutions apply for projects under the category "C", a field appraisal will be conducted to check the physical existence of the organization at the registered address, capturing the photograph of the institution, verification of the number of employees in the head office.

Besides the above, the following eligibility conditions have to be met by all three categories.

i. More than three years old at the time the application is received by MoRD.

ii. Not have negative net worth in at least two out of the last three years.

iii. Have a turn over that is at least 25% of the size of the proposed project.

iv. In the case of NSDC partners i.e. entities in which NSDC has an equity stake or provided loans, the minimum existence for a period of three years and the negative net worth requirement will not be insisted.

v. Consortiums can also apply provided they meet the following conditions:

a. The lead consortium partner meets the conditions of eligibility set forth in these guidelines.

b. The lead partner undertakes to develop the capabilities of the other partners.

c. There is a clear division of responsibilities.

d. The oversight mechanism of the lead partner is explicit and adequate.

e. The lead partners bear the full responsibility on behalf of the other partners also. The junior partners can thus claim credit for the work done by them under the consortium for categorization in future projects.

f. In case one of the consortium partners do not fulfill the conditions above, the lead partners should give an undertaking to pay all government dues in the event of any consortium partners being unable to do so.

g. The lead partners cannot walkout after the project is approved. In case one of the partners walks out of a project, all the commitments as per the MOU have to be met by the lead partner. The lead partner will also be liable to recover any money released to partners for which work has not been completed as per the contract.

vi. PIAs can also work through the franchisee/outsourcing arrangement. If the project proponent plans to operate centers through a franchisee arrangement this should be clearly mentioned in the application and in the project sanction order. The core components of Aakeevika Skills are training and placement. If the PIAs intend to outsource the implementation of core components of the project, it has to indicate this clearly during the time of submission of projects. The details of the partner organization (to whom work is being outsourced) including the name, legal status, details of main employees for the project, turnover, net worth and balance sheet has to be submitted along with the proposal. All the details of the financial arrangement between partners for the project have to be submitted. The bank details of the partner organisation also have to be provided and registered in CPSMS.

4.8 Development of Protocols for various processes and tasks in the Aajeevika Skills

The SRLMs should prepare protocols for the various processes and tasks listed in these guidelines. The protocols have to be approved by the E.C of MoRD. The Model protocols have been developed and shared with the States to help them in preparing their protocols. The model protocols have been developed for the following processes and tasks:

i. Inspection of training centres.

ii. Due diligence before allowing a training centre to begin operation.

iii. Post placement tracking for one year.

iv. Verification of accounts.

v. Fortnightly review of online MIS.

vi. Field appraisal of application for Aajeevika Skills project.

vii. Teaching English

viii. Teaching computers

ix. Soft skills

x. Look and feel of training centres

xi. Training centre day opening and day closing

xii. Distance education using live studio based broadcasts by master trainers

xiii. Mobilization

xiv. Counselling

xv. Screening, Aptitude assessment, selection of candidates
xvi. Job Fairs
xvii. On the Job Training
xviii. Placement verification
xix. Post placement support payment
xx. Claim for 2nd, 3rd and 4th instalments
xxi. Application form for project approval
xxii. Third party certification
xxiii. Career Progression payment verification
xxiv. One year retention payment verification
xxv. Work readiness and employability centres
xxvi. Migration Support Centres
xxvii. Role of SHG
xxviii. Role of Gram Panchayat
xxix. PIA documents

4.9 Date of Applicability of revised Aajeevika Skills guidelines

The Central Government in the past has sanctioned placement linked skilling Special Projects under SGSY (subsequently revised and renamed as placement linked skilling projects under Aajeevika in the year 2012) to PIAs. AAP states have also been sanctioning placement linked skilling projects to PIAs according to the 2012 guidelines.

With the coming into force of these guidelines (2013), any remaining activities related to on-going skilling and placement projects shall be covered under the new guidelines. In the case of on-going projects, those PIAs who wish to be governed by the 2012 guidelines (wholly or partly) should give so in writing within 30 days of the notification of these guidelines (2013). In case no written indication is received from the PIA within 30 days, MoRD will issue a revised sanction order for the activities that remain and in the case of projects in which PIAs have requested for part implementation of the 2013 guidelines, revised sanction orders will be issued - terms and conditions will be mutually agreed. Accordingly, in cases where it is necessary, TSA will execute a revised MOU within 15 days of the issue of the revised sanction orders.

4.10 Convergence

Convergence is a continuous process and while the broad principles can be laid down, it is the SRLMs that will have to take the lead in working out convergence at the State and district level based on the existing skill development programmes. The level of engagement and mechanism for convergence will vary across the State and District.

State level: Number of States have setup State Missions for Skill development. The Institutional mechanisms to implement the mandates have also been setup. In case of existing mechanisms, they can be utilised for convergence with other programmes. In other states, an Inter Departmental Coordination Committee headed by the Chief Secretary and consisting of Principal Secretaries of major departments involved in skilling programmes can be set up for addressing convergence issues. Some of the probable activities for the convergence mechanism at the State are:

i. Standardisation of courses - curriculum development
ii. Assessment and certification – NOS/NCVT/ MES, industry certification
iii. Developing an inventory of public infrastructure that could be made available either on a part time or full time basis for skilling, either as training centres or as hostel accommodation.
iv. Involving academia and research agencies for improving the implementation of Aajeevika Skills
v. Harmonising the quantum of assistance, identification of institutes, types of skilling provided etc. across various skilling programmes

District Level: A coordination committee headed by the District Collector and head of departments of key line departments can be the institutional mechanism at the district level for bringing convergence in implementation. The Programme Manager of the District Project

Management Unit can be the convenor of the coordination committee. The activities will include:

i. Utilising the outreach of departments for IEC and mobilisation activities.

ii. Availability of databases of various departments including the education, panchyati raj departments etc. for developing strategies.

iii. Coordinating with district level industry associations for job placements.

iv. Inclusion of skilling as part of the district level planning processes

4.11 Project completion

The completion report of both AAP and SSP projects should be uploaded by the TSA on the MoRD skills web site along with their comments for the release of the 4th and final instalment.

5. Financial Management

5.1 Allocation to States

Annual allocations to states will be done using a mix of state poverty ratios and states absorption capacity. Skills and placement is an evolving sector with uneven capacity between states. Though all efforts will be made to build capacity of states in this regard, it is expected to take time. Skill and placement projects also have long gestation periods because of which it is important that spending decisions are completed well before the start of the financial year. With the hike in central allocation for skills went to 25% from 2013-14; it will be the capacity of states to use available resources that is likely to determine how much resources will flow to which state, at least for the period of the 12th Plan.

MoRD will therefore be announcing approximate state wise allocations in the month of December each year. This is to enable states to reflect this in the plan proposals they bring to the EC meetings in January. If a state is unable to utilise the funds released to it in the preceding financial year, by the 30th April of the financial year in which fresh fund releases are being considered, 50% of the unused amount of allocation of the preceding year will be deducted from the fresh release and distributed among states that have fully used their allocation in the previous financial year. This exercise will be repeated on 31st October of the financial year, using the fund utilisation data as on 30th September and all the unused allocations will be moved to states that have exhausted theirs. Allocations to states are made irrespective of whether they are AAP or not, but the first priority will be for committed liabilities.

The ratio of Central and State Government share is 75:25 for all States other than North-Eastern States including Sikkim where the ratio is 90:10. However, in case of skilling projects under Himayat initiative in Jammu and Kashmir, the Central assistance shall be 100%. State Governments may contribute up to 10% of the project cost in kind (e.g. infrastructure facilities for skilling and OJT) as their share in the total project cost.

The Companies Act 2013 makes it mandatory for every company having a net worth of Rs 500 crore or more or turnover of Rs 1000 crore or more or net profit of Rs 5 crore or more during any financial year to formulate a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy indicating the activities that would be undertaken by the Company. Skill impartation is explicitly recognised as an acceptable CSR activity. It is very likely that Corporates would like to contribute for this purpose. Since, only a few Corporates have their own CSR Foundations, most corporates would be looking for avenues for investing in skill development, based on geography, skillsets or identified PIAs.In order to tap this potential, SRLMs should be positioned to take up projects with CSR funding as part of the total corpus of available funds. The protocols for using CSR funds shall be notified by Ministry.

5.2 Allocation to North Eastern States

Out of the total allocation for Aajeevika Skills, 10% will be earmarked for North Eastern States including Sikkim. The Central Government may notify a sub-scheme for North-east states taking into account the special nature of assistance necessary in the region. Till then projects shall be evaluated in terms of these guidelines.

5.3 Allocation for Himayat

A separate Aajeevika Skills vertical for Jammu and Kashmir is in operation since 2012-13. This is a 100% centrally funded scheme. The target is to skill 1,00,000 youth from Jammu and Kashmir and place at least 75,000 of them in the formal sector and in self-employment in five years.

5.4 Allocation for Roshini

Another Aajeevika Skills vertical was launched in 2013-14 for rural poor youth in 24 most critical Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts. It has been expanded to 27 LWE districts on 25th July, 2013.

5.5 Cost norms and fund release criteria

The EC in MoRD will revise the cost norms and fund release criteria from time to time. The latest version of the norms and criteria can be accessed from http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in.

5.6 Fund release - Centre to AAP States and to PIAs in AAP States

On approval of the AAP in January, funds are earmarked for each state. Funds meant for PIAs are released to the SRLM via CPSMS. State share is also to be credited to the state Aajeevika Skills bank account. All payments to PIAs in AAP states will be made by the SRLM. 50% of the funds required to be spend by the SRLM its district and sub-district units will be disbursed in advance. When 60% of the total amount available is spent, as reflected in the MIS, the remaining 50% will be disbursed via CPSMS. For this a separate core banking enabled account will have to be registered by all users of Aajeevika Skills resources including TSC and PIA because all fund flows and accounting will be through CPSMS using electronic fund transfers.

5.7 Fund release - Centre to non AAP States and to PIAs in non AAP States

On approval of the non AAP states YP in January, funds are earmarked for non AAP states as well. 50% of the funds payable to PIAs during the year according to the year programme approved by the EC for non AAP states and the 1.5 % fee of the TSA are released through CPSMS to the TSA[15].Once the TSA disburses 60% of the funds routed to it, the remaining 50% for the financial year will be released to the TSA. State share has to reach the PIA within 10 days of release of Central Share by the TSA.

5.8 Accounting Systems

The cabinet decision on the fund allocation for NRLM has mandated 25% of the total budgetary allocation for the skills programme. Therefore, an exclusive accounting system to track the funds for Aajeevika Skills programme from the central level to the sub-district level has to be established. The State Governments have to incorporate the necessary instructions in their administrative and financial management systems to capture the fund flow for the skills programme.

5.9 Payments to PIAs

PIAs will receive payments from the SRLM for projects sanctioned through the AAP route by AAP states. In the case of projects in non AAP states and on-going multi-state projects in both AAP and non-AAP states, PIA will paid by MoRDs TSA. All payments will be made according to the following release conditions:

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[15] As the States migrate from non AAP States to AAP States, fund release will be done through SRLM.

Table 6: Release conditions for PIA

Instalment	AAP	SSP	MSP	Release condition
1	25% of project cost	25% of project cost	25% of project cost	On sanction of project and signing of MOU.
2	50% of project cost	50% of project cost	50% of project cost	On: a. Spending 60% of funds disbursed as 1st instalment as visible in web site. b. Achieving 40% of physical target inclusive of sub-targets such as for SC/ST, minorities etc. c. Submitting audited expenditure statement like P&L statement, Balance sheet etc with respect of previous year for cases after 30th September.
3	15% of project cost	15% of project cost	15% of project cost	On: a. Spending 90% of funds disbursed as 1st and 2nd instalments as visible in website. b. Achieving 90% of physical target inclusive of sub-targets such as for SC/ST, minorities etc. c. Submitting audited expenditure statement like P&L statement, Balance sheet etc with respect of previous year for cases after 30th September.
4	10% of project cost	10% of project cost	10%of project cost	On achieving all targets and submission of project closure documents as well as signed score card. However, the release of the 4th instalment will not be held up till the one year tracking is complete.

For processing payments to PIAs, in instances where validating invoices is resulting in delaying the payments as per agreed time limits, then payments should be made "on account" and deductions if any should be made from subsequent payments to PIAs.

Eligibility conditions for release of funds at all four stages are determined by the MIS statements of the PIA available on their web site. The MIS statements have to indicate the Physical and Financial achievements. If the achievements meet the conditions for release of payment at each stage, a request for processing the payments will be generated and send to PIAs or SRLMs.

TSAs should ensure that completion of all the Audit process has to be completed within seven days of PIA becoming eligible as per the MIS. The financial details used to determine eligibility should pertain only to the reference period for each instalment.

The interest amount accrued on Government releases, if any, shall be adjusted against the Government share of the Project cost at the time of release. In the case of the PIA not being able to meet targets under the various sub categories, releases will be calculated based on pro rata basis.

5.10 Electronic processing of fund release

PIAs, TSA and SRLM will be required to maintain a separate account linked to CPSMS since all payments will be made to this account electronically when all release conditions have been completed and authenticated. Digital signatures will be acceptable in the case of documents that are transmitted electronically.

5.11 Service level assurance by MoRD, its TSA and SRLM

MoRD, it's TSA and the SRLM is committed to ensuring that the PIA receives sanction orders and payment of instalments in accordance with the time frames mentioned in this document.

5.12 Procurement procedure

Aajeevika Skills follows a fixed cost model for procuring skills and placement services from PIAs. According to this PIAs who meet eligibility conditions are sanctioned projects according to resources indicated in the AAP. In case adequate funds are not available in the approved plan to finance all PIA projects, then a first come first come served rationing protocol will be used. This procedure has been adopted because skills and placement is a quality intensive exercise that does not lend itself to least cost models of procurement. For all other procurements in Aajeevika Skills, NRLM approved procedures will be followed.

5.13 Applicability of Guidelines

For all relationships between the PIA, TSA, State Governments and Central Governments, no clause in the guideline will be applicable with retrospective effect unless it is mutually agreed upon by all the parties involved.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1 Monitoring

Monitoring is a continuous measurement of progress while the project is on-going. This involves checking and measuring progress, analysing the situation and reacting to new events, opportunities and issues. The key objectives of monitoring in Aajeevika Skills are to:

i.   Keep track of performance against Aajeevika Skillss overall goals (achieve quality and sustainable skill development at scale)

ii. Use the knowledge gained to ensure informed decision-making

iii. Identify any course corrections needed, at State, TSA, MoRD and PIA level to improve outcomes

iv. Inform MoRDs future strategy, policy and sector choices

v.   Support PIAs and States in course correction, in a prioritised manner (based on well-defined triggers).

The Aajeevika Skills team in MoRD with the help of NIRD and other agencies act as a knowledge platform for developing effective monitoring framework and capacitating the state to build effective review systems for Aajeevika Skills. This would involve interventions to

i.   Establish high level monitoring objectives across levels

ii. Determine the key performance indicators for each process (mobilisation, training, placement and retention)

iii. Specify who and what needs to be monitored (PIA performance, programme performance, quality of internal systems and processes, performances of TSAs).

6.2 Periodic monitoring of AAP

Periodic monitoring of AAP States and projects sanctioned in those States need to be done at the Central and State level. An Ecosystem approach will be used so that PIAs and States are supported in the achievement of agreed goals.

6.3 Role of TSA

Central and State Governments can procure services of competent TSA to monitor their Aajeevika Skills project. If the work of concurrent monitoring is being outsourced, specific MoU needs to be entered into. The MoU may also incorporate the scope for engagement of the CBOs in social audit. The States may provide for role of CBOs depending on the extent of their presence and level of capability to undertake responsibilities entrusted with them.

6.4 Concurrent monitoring of PIA as basis for fund release under AAP and SSP

Concurrent monitoring through an internet enabled ERP system will make it possible for all stakeholders to monitor the performance of the PIA against agreed performance indicators. Field inspections are to be undertaken to check that the information on the MIS is accurate and provides a true picture of the goings on. The first level of check is to be done by the Q team of the PIA each month and the results are to be posted on designated web sites. All other inspections will aim to verify whether that the results published from the inspection by the Q team of the PIA was an accurate mirror of the reality in the training centre and in the workplace.

The SRLM should employ independent monitors to concurrently monitor the outputs of the project. These reports would be relevant to determining the quality and impact of specific projects as well as of the programme in general and can feed into further planning and fund release decisions. The monitoring reports should be made available to the MoRD.

6.5 Concurrent monitoring outputs

6.5.1 Fortnightly monitoring and guidance notes to PIAs using online MIS of PIA: TSAs will monitor the online MIS on a regular basis and issue/ upload fortnightly guidance notes to identify and notify non-compliance and for improving the use and functioning of online MIS.

6.5.2 Monitoring of compliance by PIAs on points raised in guidance notes: PIAs will be required to comply with the points raised in the guidance notes within a week of the upload of guidance notes.

6.5.3 Monthly inspection of training centres by Q team of PIA: Q team of PIA will undertake monthly inspection of training centres. The proceedings of these visits will be recorded through GPS-enabled video/audio clips and uploaded along with action points for compliance by the training centre manager and trainers in the workflow MIS and monitored for compliance.

6.5.4 Bi-monthly inspection of training centres by State TSA: SRLM officials/ State TSA will undertake bi-monthly inspection of training centres. The proceedings of these visits will be recorded through GPS-enabled video/audio clips and uploaded in the workflow MIS along with action points for compliance by centre managers and trainers and monitored for compliance.

6.5.5 Tri-monthly inspection of training centres by MoRD's TSA: MoRDs TSA will undertake tri-monthly inspection of training centres. The proceedings of these visits will be recorded through GPS-enabled video/audio clips and uploaded in the workflow MIS and monitored along with action points for compliance by centre managers and trainers and monitored for compliance.

6.5.6 GPS enabled bio-metric attendance of trainer and trainees: Deployment of geo-tagged, time stamped biometric devices for taking attendance of trainers and trainees and pushing it in real time to a central server visible to the Q team of the PIA and State/MoRD TSA will be one of the pre-requisites for starting up a training centre.

6.5.7 Read-only access to project bank account: PIAs will have to open a separate bank account for the Aajeevika Skills project and register the account details on CPSMS so that read-only access is available to the TSA/SRLM of the bank account of the PIA. Using this the TSA/SRLM will monitor:
i.   Timely salary payment to trainers
ii. Timely payment of monthly post-placement support to placed candidates
iii. Timely payment of monthly transport and food support to non-residential trainees.

6.5.8 Online logging of training centres: Daily opening and closing of training centres has to be logged online along with geo-tagged time stamped photographs of the class room and lab.

6.5.9 No monitoring other than the above: No separate progress reports are to be submitted by the PIAs. Instead the State and NRLM Skills IT platform should be exchanging information on real time basis as they are internet-enabled and workflow driven. This will ensure that all stakeholders will have up-to-date information on all aspects of each project on a real time basis. Till such time that the State and NRLM Skills platforms are rolled out, monthly reports may be uploaded on the NRLM Skills website.

6.5.10 Evaluation: Evaluation of Aajeevika Skills projects serves two key purposes. First it improves systems and processes for programme delivery. Second it encourages and supports learning among stakeholders including PIAs. Evaluation by reputed external agencies brings in newer perspectives and helps improve efficiency and effectiveness.

6.5.11 Independent evaluation studies: Robust, independent evaluation of Aajeevika Skills will provide information about what works, what does not and why. This learning will contribute

to improving programme effectiveness and will help to hold all stakeholders accountable for results. Aajeevika Skills provides separate funding under AAP budget to States to conduct independent evaluation studies.

6.5.12 Evaluation of AAPs : Evaluation of AAP can be undertaken by the SRLM either in-house or through any reputed evaluation agency. The Ministry may also conduct evaluation of AAPs of a single State or group of States. Such evaluation reports will be examined by the EC.

6.5.13 Programme evaluation of Aajeevika Skills: The evaluation of Aajeevika Skills will be conducted as per the frequency and terms of reference approved by the EC and shall be undertaken after one year of commencement of Aajeevika Skills.

7. MIS

The management of the quality of the programme requires information to be constantly assessed and built upon. This can be ensured only through regular tracking and follow up. Therefore incorporating a robust internet-enabled workflow driven MIS is critical for the success of the programme.

An online reporting system and website – www.aajeevikaskills.gov.in. has been developed. This is being converted to an internet-enabled workflow driven ERP platform so that all aspects of programme management including submission of proposals, release of funds, training centre management etc. can be handled through this. Currently this website contains details of Aajeevika Skills projects under implementation, latest status on progress made in each project across all States and districts, details about PIAs, training centres etc.

States can use this platform for hosting and delivering variety of project services like Financial Management System (FMS), Decision Support Systems (DSS) for skills development activities (within the framework of the National MIS). The NMMU will provide support in respect of the activities and outputs related to the scope of work of ERP based MIS for state missions.

PIAs will have to maintain trainee specific information and meet all applicable reporting requirements. The regularity and quality of entry of information will be supervised by the SRLM and the TSA.

7.1 Internet-enabled workflow driven national and State platform (that talk to each other)

Although a national skills ERP platform is being built, states are encouraged to build their own platforms so as to meet their day to day analytical and branding needs. Arrangements will be made for them to receive data they need from the MoRD platform. This will mean that PIAs will have to enter data only once. Till such time that that the MoRD website becomes a workflow driven ERP system, PIAs will be required to designate an authority within the PIA who will be responsible for updating the required data on the http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in web site.

Some states have already developed independent MIS. While some aspects of the MIS are bound to be common across States, some States may have nuances and innovations in their AAP that are relevant only to the State. It may also have common MIS with similarly placed programmes that are specific to the State. Synchronisation of State Portal with the NRLM Skills and Skill Mission data bases will be essential elements of the AAP. Bridge software in order to migrate between platforms without the state and PIAs having to once again feed data points needs to be developed as part of AAP. This is to be done as a joint exercise of the State and Central Skills and ICT teams.

7.2 PIAs own platform that talks to State level platforms or PIAs can use State or national platforms

Currently the data on MoRD's online reporting system is being updated every month in respect of MSPs and SSPs. Currently all PIAs are required to upload the details of beneficiaries trained and placed by them on their own websites as per standardised format. The website address of PIAs and guidance note for using MoRD's online reporting system, including the user IDs and password for district level anchor persons for uploading their monitoring report shall be notified by the MoRD on its website http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in. MoRD provides all district level anchor persons with a user id and password for uploading their monitoring reports on www.aajeevikaskills.gov.in.

Going forward, PIAs own IT platform should be able to link with the Central and State IT platforms. In case where PIAs do not have such platforms they should construct one.

7.3 Online submission of project proposals

The Aajeevika Skills national ERP platform when it is ready will have a single and integrated system of registration of PIAs and all stakeholders involved in the skilling programme. All PIAs will be required to submit their proposals for new projects and those for fund release through this platform.

This central application submission facility will be operational in the website http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in. PIAs can find out about the status and track the movement of their proposals and can raise queries and receive replies through this system. Till the time the ERP platform is established, the PIAs shall submit the applications in a standard format that can be downloaded at http://aajeevikaskills.gov.in. The completed project proposals shall be submitted to the State Government through email at the IDs given in the instructions in sheet 1 of the application form. A copy of the email shall be sent to Aajeevika Skills Division at aajeevikaskills.mord@gmail.com

8. Questions answered in each Chapter

Chapter 1

(i)   What is Aajeevika Skills?
(ii) What is skilling and placement?
(iii) How has Aajeevika Skills evolved?
(iv) Why is skilling important for India and the rural poor?
(v)   What is the national skills architecture in India?
(vi) What is MoRD's approach to skilling and placement?

Chapter 2

(i)   What is the role of Gram Panchyats in Aajeevika Skills?
(ii) What is the role of SHGs in Aajeevika Skills?

Chapter 3

(i)   Who is eligible to be trained and placed?
(ii) What are the activities to be undertaken by the SRLM and the PIA?
(iii) What are the cost norms for each activity?

Chapter 4

(i)   What is the meaning and difference between AAP, SSP and Multi-State Projects?
(ii) Why are states categorised as AAP or SSP states?
(iii) What are the steps to be taken by the SRLM in an AAP state?
(iv) What are the steps to be taken by the SRLM in a SSP state?

(v)   How should a PIA apply for Aajeevika Skills projects in an AAP state?
(vi) How should a PIA apply for Aajeevika Skills projects in a SSP state?
(vii) What will happen to on-going Multi-State Projects?

Chapter 5

(i)   How are targets and funds allocated to states?
(ii) What are the criteria based on which funds are disbursement to states?
(iii) What are the criteria based on which funds are disbursed to PIAs?
(iv) What is the role of CPSMS in disbursal of Aajeevika Skills resources?

Chapter 6

(i)   What are the objectives of Monitoring framework of Aajeevika Skills?
(ii) What is the role of TSA in the Monitoring of Aajeevika Skills?
(iii) What are the outputs expected under the concurrent Monitoring?

Chapter 7

(i)   What are the different systems to be maintained by the PIAs,SRLMs as part of Aajeevika Skills MIS?
(ii) How will the different data sets maintained by partners be integrated?
(iii) Will the online submission of projects be allowed?

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