

The Presentation by CMD in the Regional Meeting of State Secretaries of Welfare/Social Justice (Southern States: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Lakshadweep) on 09.11.2012 at Vigyan Bhavan Annexe, New Delhi

National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation was set up in 1997 to provide concessional credit to Persons with Disabilities for self employment opportunities through the channelizing agencies in the states. This system is under strain today as SCAs have beset with number of problems like Block Government Guarantee, huge over dues and non-utilisation of NHFDC funds. These problems have slowed down the momentum of progress so far and in fact prompted us for search of alternatives in order to reach out to PwDs in the states. One such alternative is expansion of NHFDC activities through a network of additional channelizing agencies like, Regional Rural Banks, Public Sector Banks etc. Further, we also realized that other weak points in our approach are lack of focus on training, missing link of handholding support and entrepreneurship development.

Madam, in view of the huge population of PwDs in **Andhra Pradesh** and the extremely slow progress by SCA, a need of an additional channel for flow of NHFDC funds was felt. In February this year State Government convened a meeting with RRBs on our request. The RRBs in principle agreed to NHFDC proposal for such a collaboration. But now, the State Channelizing Agency is reluctant to further follow up. On the one hand the State Channelising Agency is not implementing NHFDC schemes and on the other hand SCA is also not favourable for tie up with Regional Rural Banks as additional channelizing agencies. In this back drop, we had to push through the third alternative and we started discussing the collaborative arrangements with Andhra Bank. I am very happy to inform that lead bank of the state, ie., Andhra Bank has consented for such a collaboration with NHFDC. I hope we will soon break the deadlock in Andhra Pradesh and we will be reaching out

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to PwDs through Andhra Bank. At this juncture, I would like to appeal to the Principal Secretary, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh to reconsider their stand wherein they have withdrawn permission to implement NHFDC schemes in the state. Further, I would request the Principal Secretary to help us a collaborative arrangement with Regional Rural Banks. In today's scenario we need as much collaborative agencies as possible so that we can reach quickly to more number of PwDs. The performance in **Karnataka** is satisfactory but there is problem of Block Government Guarantee to speed up NHFDC schemes. State is to release to the tune of Rs. 5 crores.

I have particularly noticed that there is focus on education and entrepreneurship in the southern states i.e., Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry. I would like to inform this august gathering that NHFDC is implementing two Scholarship schemes and a Educational Loan scheme. We had developed online services for both i.e., for Scholarships and for Loan scheme so that maximum number of PwD students may take advantage of these facilities. Our education loan scheme is especially very attractive which is offering loan to a girl student with disability @ 3.5% p.a. I would therefore, like to appeal to all the Governments in these states to popularize Scholarships for PwDs and the loan scheme among the PwD students.

The PwDs constitute about 2.13 % of total population of India as per Census 2001 and 75% of this segment is living in rural areas. Therefore, there is need to focus on unorganized sector so far as the skilling of PwDs is concerned. We have to achieve the target of skilling 24 lakh PwDs in the XII Plan period, it means roughly about 5 lac PwDs are to be trained annually. This is an ambitious target which can only be achieved with the efforts of SCAs, good NGOs, reputed training providers and the efforts of PwDs themselves. I would like to mention here that skilling of PwDs should be focused in those sectors of the economy where they can have placement by way of employment or self employment. In other words, training should be linked with placement and ideally it should result in employment or self-

employment with a salary or income to sustain him on regular basis. We have opened two online services to build a database not only for those PwDs who are seeking training but also for reputed training providers. I would specially request the State Governments to help us organize this gigantic task so that we may inch towards the Govt. efforts in the direction of providing training to PwDs.

Now, an interested PwD may register himself on our website and he will be suitably advised by NHFDC after registration. I would like to inform here that all the training programmes upto one year are covered in our entrepreneurship scheme and we bear all the cost of the training and additionally a stipend of Rs. 1000/- p.m. is provided to the trainees for the entire training duration. Recently, NHFDC has taken initiative for collaboration with leading training institutes like ATDC in Hospitality related fields, ATDC for Textile related trainings, NSIC for training in Small enterprises and NIESBUD for Entrepreneurship training. The State Governments should take maximum advantage of these facilities through us. You are requested to visit our website in this regard.

We have also launched a special scheme for our Young Professionals in case the professionally qualified person like, Engineer, Doctor, CA, Architect, Fashion Designers etc etc. wish to set up their own business we are ready to fund them upto Rs. 25 lac with a nominal interest in the range of 4% to 8% p.a.

I would like to inform this august gathering that NHFDC proposes to bring an ambitious scheme extending handholding support to young entrepreneurs seeking self-employment ventures. We would be associating the reputed NGOs, reputed private training providers, LIC Agents and Bank Mitras. These facilitators will be bringing the PwDs to the Regional Rural Banks or Public Sector Banks or State Channelising Agencies wherein these

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facilitators will be guiding the PwDs for the appropriate self-employment ventures and would be filling up the forms etc by writing the project details etc. These facilitators will be provided a support of around Rs. 300 in each case by NHFDC. This amount will be released simultaneously on the release of first installment of loan amount. In this way, the NGOs, training providers, Bank Mitras and LIC Agents etc will join hands with NHFDC in expanding the potential of self-employment ventures in the country for PwDs. This will ensure organizing timely credit to beneficiaries.

Madam, I would like to inform you that **Tamil Nadu and Puducherry** Governments are implementing NHFDC schemes in the excellent way. Tamil Nadu has so far has drawn Rs. 9 crores and Puchucheery has drawn Rs. 2.23 crores against this year's allocations.

In Kerala, the state government has nominated two SCAs i.e. Kerala State Handicapped Persons Welfare Corporation Ltd. (KSHPWC) and Kerala State Women's Development Corporation Ltd. (KSWDC). During the current financial year, NHFDC has released funds to the tune of Rs.1.6 crores to Kerala State Handicapped Persons Welfare Corporation Ltd based on assurance of the state government that the guarantee support proposal is under consideration. This was only a short term arrangement. I therefore request the Principal Secretary, Govt. of Kerala to arrange adequate guarantee support to the Kerala State Handicapped Persons Welfare Corporation Ltd. to continue uninterrupted fund flow to Kerala.

The other SCA in Kerala i.e. Kerala State Women's Development Corporation Ltd. is not implementing the NHFDC schemes since 2005-06 and the performance of this SCA is NIL. I request the Principal Secretary, Govt. of Kerala to review the state of affairs of the Kerala State Women's Development Corporation Ltd. and direct the SCA to restart the implementation of NHFDC schemes.

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Lakshadweep Khadi and Village Industries Board is the SCA for implementation of NHFDC schemes. The SCA is slow in implementing NHFDC schemes in the Union Territory and not submitting adequate proposals against the notional allocation of Rs.20.0 lakhs. The achievement during the current financial year is Nil. I request the Principal Secretary, Lakshadweep to review the performance of SCA and direct them to speed up implementation of NHFDC schemes.

In the end, I would like to mention that we have developed a special scheme wherein a PwD can take concessional loan for purchase of Assistive Devices to enhance their employability and to perform efficiently the assigned job. Assistive Devices like, Screen Reader, Retrofitted Mobility Aids, Artificial Limbs etc. are included in the Assistive Devices scheme. The details of the scheme are available on NHFDC website.
