KSHAMTA TO OVERSEE CENTRAL ASSISTED TRIBAL WELFARE FUND

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Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, Government of India, has come up with a new programme called Knowledge System and Home-based Agricultural Management in Tribal Areas (KSHAMTA).

They have decided to put ‘Tribal sub Plan’ programme now rechristened as Scheduled Tribe Component (STC) under it, and decided to implement the new programme in 39 selected aspirational districts across the nation.

KSHAMTA is set to act as an umbrella of the activities that need to be undertaken while executing the Scheduled Tribe Welfare activities.

Objectives of KSHAMATHA

(a) Local/Indigenous knowledge in the area to be identified, documented and analyzed

(b) Scientific interventions for development of climate resilient and sustainable practices

(c) Integration of scientific research and indigenous technical knowledge/practices for livelihood security and nutritional security of tribal farmers

(d) Training programmes and demonstrations for the tribal farmers on processing and value addition

(e) Demonstration and training in fish culture and livestock-related activities

KSHAMTA also enabled with a real-time online monitoring system with an option to track the end user of the welfare scheme called ‘Scheduled Tribe Component Monitoring System (STCMS)’ for focusing not just on financial allocations and utilisations but also on monitoring of schemes, allocations, monitoring of physical performance to assess and review output and achievement against physical target based on the framework designed by NITI Ayog.

The other feature introduced is the importance given to the Districts as a sole beneficiary unit replacing the existing cluster/area tribal population factor for the selection. The new features will be added to the current projects applicable to the selected 39 aspirational districts spreading over 14 states across India.

The majority of beneficiary districts are selected from the high tribal populated states like Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha respectively with 12, 9 and 5 districts each.

Scheduled Tribe Component Programmes (STC) though, presently monitored by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), but initiated way back in 1970’s during the fifth plan period as a Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) to ensure adequate fund flow to the Scheduled tribal areas throughout the country, had a good impact on improving the socio-economic levels of the tribal population in most of the project implemented areas.

Since the inception of the programmes during 1970’s to 2014, the monitoring of programme was conducted by the planning commission.

After the disbanding of the planning commission in 2014, the monitoring of the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) were put in the hands of NITI Ayog for a while. Later from 2017, it is completely handed over to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.

With the new systems in place, the government aims to bring twin goals of more transparency and more effectiveness from the ministries concerned and from different implementing agencies like ICAR while executing the project in the selected districts.

Kochi based ICAR-CIFT; one of the premiere fishery research institute in ICAR entrusted for the execution of programmes and it is devoted to spearhead in developing awareness on optimum utilization of resources for sustainable fishery, ITK validation and value addition.

Also for processing of fish entrepreneur development, conducting capacity building programmes and demonstrations for the upliftment of tribal population in coordination with various Kisan Vigyan Kendra’s (KVK’s) and state agencies across the selected tribal areas.

During the previous financial year, 2017-18 ICFT actively conducted tribal welfare programmes at Vazhachal in Thrissur District, Kanjirapuzha and Mannarkkad in Palakkad District and Peruvannamozhi in Kozhikode District with the objective of securing sustainable livelihood resources for the tribals in these areas.

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(The view expressed by the writer is his own and do not reflect the opinion of ICAR-CIFT)