

Union Cabinet Approves Scheme to Provide Drones to 15, 000 Women Self Help Groups

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has approved the Central Scheme for providing Drones to Women Self Help Groups (SHGs), with a total expenditure of Rs. 1261 Crore for FY2024-25 to FY2025-26.

Under the scheme, 15,000 selected women SHGs will be given drones for providing rental services to the farmers for agriculture purpose. The scheme is also aimed at empowering women Self Help Groups (SHGs) and bringing new technologies via drone services in the agriculture sector.



About the scheme:

The central scheme approves holistic interventions by converging the resources & efforts of Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Department of Rural development, Department of Fertilizers, Women SHGs, and Lead Fertilizer Companies. In addition, suitable clusters where usage of Drones is economically feasible would be identified & progressive 15,000 women SHGs from different States in the identified clusters will be selected for providing drones.

Central Financial Assistance at 80 percent of the cost of drone and accessories or ancillary charges up to a maximum of Rs. 8 Lakh would be given to the women SHGs for purchase of drones. The Cluster Level

Federation (CLFs) of SHGs can raise the balance amount as loan under the National Agriculture Infra Financing Facility (AIF). An interest subvention at the rate of 3 percent on the AIF loan will be provided.

One of the members of the women SHGs who is well qualified and above 18 years of age will be chosen by the SRLM and LFCs for 15-day training covering 5-day mandatory drone pilot training & additional 10-day training for agriculture purpose of nutrient & pesticide application. Moreover, considering the problems which SHGs may face in obtaining the drones, repair, and maintenance of drones through drone companies, the LFCs will act as a bridge between drone supplier companies & SHGs. LFCs will also endorse use of Nano Fertilizers like Nano Urea & Nano DAP by the drones with SHGs.

It is predicted that the approved initiatives under the scheme would provide sustainable business and livelihood support to 15,000 SHGs helping them earn additional income of at least Rs. 1 lakh per annum.