

Guidelines for Food, Nutrition, Health, and WASH (FNHW) Immersion Sites

Concept

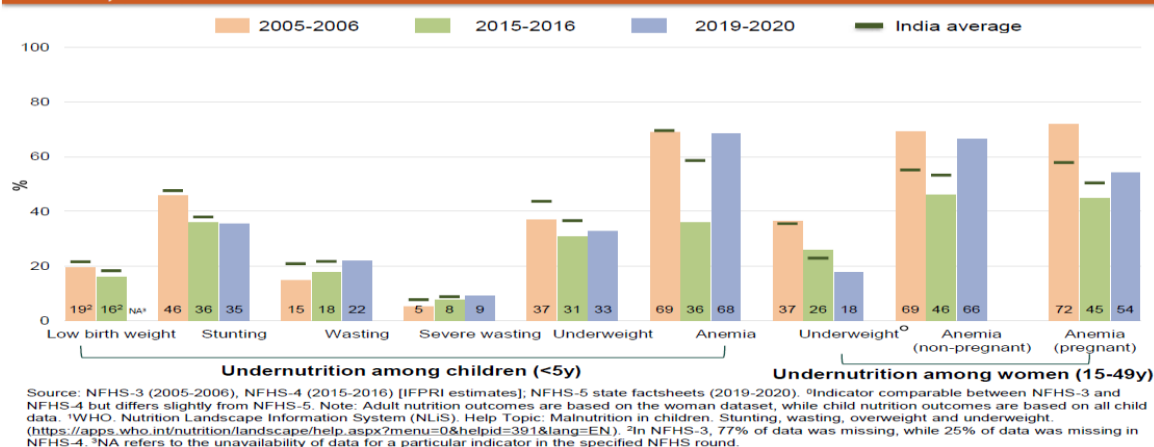
Food, Nutrition, Health and WASH (FNHW) Immersion sites refers to the selected sites that demonstrate all the aspects and elements required for integration of FNHW in the community institutions. Assam, due to various socio-economic factors, has faced demand side barriers related to lack of awareness, poor health seeking behaviours, social customs, and gender discrimination. The factors mentioned above have a direct relation to the active uptake of existing Food, Nutrition, Health and WASH (FNHW) services by the citizens, especially by those who belong to the marginalized and vulnerable intersectional categories. For bringing in a socio-cultural change, it is important to create awareness at the grassroot levels, which pushes the community to demand the available FNHW services and for that layering the intervention through SHG platform is important. Aggregate levels of under nutrition in Assam remain shockingly high, despite the impressive reduction in stunting in the last decade. The segments most at risk continue to be adolescent girls, women, and children, and among them Scheduled Castes and Tribes, Minorities and residents of Tea Garden areas are the worst off, reflecting the insidious economic and socio-cultural deprivation. The poor nutritional status of adolescent girls, combined with child marriage and multiple pregnancies even before becoming an adult, lead to another dismal fact that 30 per cent of all children are born with low birth weight. So, we add approximately seven million, potentially wasted and stunted, to our population every year! For Assam to be healthy and break the inter-generational cycle of malnutrition, we must focus on the health, nutrition and social status of children, adolescent girls, and women as a priority.

Taking example from different states, the FNHW interventions implemented through women's collective are found to have significant outcomes. Factors such as women empowerment, increasing women's role in decision making, income generation activities, group participation, social networking, collective problem solving etc. favours the SHGs to create that psychosocial change in the community and as a group of women who are referred to as caregiver, they have the potential to bring the required change by pushing the rural and vulnerable communities for the adoption of healthy, nutritional, and more hygienic practices.

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Fig:- Comparative study of Health & Nutrition Status of Assam, IFPRI 2021

Figure 1. Trends in undernutrition outcomes, 2005-2006, 2015-2016, 2019-2020



To address health, nutrition, wash and sanitation related issues and bring behaviour change to adopt recommended practices among SHG members, DAY-NRLM has been implementing FNHW interventions. Under Food, Nutrition health and WASH (FNHW), ASRLM have developed a state specific operational strategy focusing on awareness generation and SBCC related to maternal and child health and nutrition, diet diversity, reducing anaemia, menstrual hygiene, diarrhoea, usage of toilets, hand washing and management of solid and liquid waste. FNHW component focuses on creation of awareness on consumption of the produce from nutri-gardens, backyard poultry, small ruminants (Goatery, piggery etc.) and dairy related interventions under the mission and other sources for improving nutritional intake and thereby impacting the nutrition status of women and child through the SHG network promoted under Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission.

Purpose

The purpose of developing Immersion Sites in the state of Assam are as follows:

1. Improvement in the status of key Food, Nutrition, Health and WASH (FNHW) behaviors among Target Groups
2. To demonstrate the Behavior Change in the community through the SHG Network
3. To build capacity of the SHG Institutions and the Community Cadres on FNHW
4. To demonstrate the feasibility and scalability of FNHW operational plans in the State
5. To document the learnings and replicate in scale for other geographical areas
6. Building capacities of the existing Human Resources such as the officials, Cadres etc.
7. To replicate the new initiatives and disseminate the knowledge gained in the form of case studies or success stories.
8. To promote Better Convergence mechanisms
 - a. Within the organization, e.g.; convergence with farm livelihood vertical for creating Agri-Nutri Garden and Non-Farm Vertical for creating FNHW Enterprises
 - b. With other Line Departments
9. Inclusion of FNHW Budget
10. Building capacity of the community institutions in identifying and addressing issues related to FNHW and representation in the Community Forums like Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Committees (VHSNC) and Gram Sabhas etc.
11. Development of a Model Block which will successfully demonstrate all components of FNHW as well as act as a platform for successful convergence with various Departments

The **goal, objectives, focus and target groups** are listed below

Goal:

The Goal of the FNHW program under ASRLM is multi-faceted:

1. Improvement in the status of key Food, Nutrition, Health and WASH (FNHW) behaviors among women & Child
2. Improvement in all the key Indicators on FNHW through Community Driven Process
3. Awareness building as well as Capacity Building of all SHG Women on various component of FNHW.
4. Contribute towards poverty reduction by decreasing out of pocket expenditure due to poor health.
5. Increasing income through establishment of FNHW enterprises.
6. Establish a successful convergence and community ownership for improvement in Health & Nutrition Status.
7. Successfully demonstrate a transformation in Behavior and age-old practices through various forums of SHGs.

Objectives:

1. Improve awareness among the SHG members on good behaviors and practices on FNHW with special focus on first 1000 days (i.e., Antenatal Care, Postnatal Care, Infant and Young Child Feeding, Maternal and child Nutrition and IFA consumption).
2. Improve knowledge of target beneficiaries through community institutions (SHG, VO and CLF) on government services, schemes and entitlements related to FNHW.
3. Establish and strengthen functional convergence platforms with related SRLM verticals and other government/non-government stakeholders for improving access of SHG households to FNHW services.
4. Improve the present Health & Nutrition scenario in the state through women collective led movement.
5. Improve livelihoods of women under the women collectives (VOs and CLFs) through FNHW enterprises while also improving the FNHW outcomes of households associated with ASRLM SHGs.

Activities to be performed in an IMMERSION SITE : Activities can be divided into two parts : Preparatory Activities & Implementation Activities

1. **Preparatory Activities:**

- 1.1. **Preparatory Activities at the State Level**

- a. Orientation of the members of State Core Committee
- b. Revision of the State Operational Strategy on the Integration component.
- c. Sensitization of all staffs as FNHW component being the outcome of all the activities carried out.
- d. Detailed Plan of Action
- e. Development of District Level Master Trainers who will also act as District Nodal Person.
- f. Training of DPMs and BPMs about the FNHW intervention and Immersion Site
- g. Development of Resource Person within the Organization and Outside the Organization.
- h. Development of Review & Monitoring mechanism at all level.

- 1.2. **Preparatory Activities at the District Level**

- a. Detailed orientation of all the DMMU staff on FNHW concepts and Immersion Sites
- b. Development of adequate resource pool primarily from Jeevika Sakhis and other community cadres like Pashu Sakhis, Krishi Sakhis, Sanjog Sakhis and CRP-Eps
- c. Development of District Nodal Person for all the FNHW related Interventions.

- 1.3. **Preparatory Activities at the Block Level**

- a. Detailed orientation of all the BMMU staff on FNHW concepts and Immersion Site.
- b. Selection and Development of adequate resource pool primarily from Jeevika Sakhis and other community cadres like Pashu Sakhis, Krishi Sakhis, Sanjog Sakhis and CRP-Eps
- c. Development and Capacity Building of the Block level Master trainer from the pools of cadres.
- d. Training of CLF EC and CLF SAC along with VO EC and VO SAC members
- e. Development of CLFs as a Resource and repository of Knowledge on Good Behaviour and Practices, Schemes & Entitlements related to FNHW.

Considering this, ASRLM in collaboration with UNICEF have developed a training module for the Master Trainers, CLF-EC and SAC members of ASRLM for sensitizing women on FNHW. Subsequent ToT will be conducted for the CLF-EC members, who will in turn orient their respective VO on FNHW Concepts & Practises. These information will also be disseminated at SHG level by the VO

representatives by initiating the discussion as per FNHW Weekly agenda calendar and discussions initiated at VO Level.

Implementation Activities

1.4. System Strengthening

- a. Development of State Operational Strategy
- b. State Level Core Committee to be formed.
- c. State Resource Persons to be developed
- d. District Master Trainers to be identified and trained
- e. Master Trainers from Community Cadres (80% necessarily to be Jeevika Sakhis) to be identified and trained rigorously
- f. FNHW Training Manual, Handbook and Flipchart etc. to be developed and made available at all Level.
- g. FNHW deliverables to be added in the job responsibilities of District Project Managers and Block Project Managers
- h. All the resource materials developed for various interventions under FNHW by NMMU & SMMU shall be adapted and shared with the DMMU, BMMU officials and Master Trainers
- i. Training of CLFs and VOs exclusively on FNHW Concepts & Practices has to be completed.
- j. ToT of CLF EC has to be completed on FNHW.
- k. Capacity Building of all the SAC(Social Action Committee) of VO & CLF on FNHW has to be completed.
- l. Dasasutra Training to be completed for all the SHGs
- m. Gender Sensitization Training to be completed for all the SHGs
- n. FNHW Training to be completed for all the SHGs under the site.
- o. VO to conduct monthly review of SHGs on FNHW and prepare action plan.
- p. Grading of CBOs and Review by CLFs and VOs on FNHW Parameters.
- q. Vulnerability Reduction Fund (VRF) may be utilized for FNHW related issues and needs as decided by the Village Organization (VO)
- r. Resource Centre (A physical space) will be developed at CLFs which will generate awareness on various Entitlements & Services on FNHW at Village level.
- s. **Naari Xurakha Kokh (NXK)** to act as nodal body to ensure Implementation, monitoring and addressal on FNHW related needs and issues.
- t. The FNHW indicators shall be regularly monitored and MPR(MPRs) at all levels shall be submitted by 5th of each month
- u. Review meeting at State level to be planned by the end of every quarter at SMMU level
- v. Review meeting at District level to be planned by the end of every month at DMMU level
- w. Review meeting at District level to be planned by the end of every month at BMMU level
- x. Documentation of efforts, progress, best practices and other initiatives shall be done at all level

1.5. Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)

- a. All CLFs/ VOs and SHGs shall be conducting discussion on identifies FNHW related issues. List for weekly discussion is annexed with this document as Annexure -A.
- b. All SHG members will adopt different SBCC good behavior and practices
- c. SBCC activities can be in the form of Community Based Events, Campaigns, Home-Visits, Peer Counselling
- d. Awareness on rights and entitlements related services such as PDS, THR etc. shall be imparted to all the SHG members and members shall be encouraged to avail their rights and entitlements.
- e. FNHW related information shall be displayed at CLF, VO offices and at Community Managed Training Centers (CMTC) such as on importance of diet diversity, food groups, hygiene and sanitation related issues.

- f. Agri Nutri Garden along with mandatory Livestock promotion to be adopted by all the SHG households for increase in dietary diversity.
- g. Awareness building on Health & Nutrition Status of women through BMI/Health Camps for all the SHG members at Village level through VO & CLFs.
- h. Various IEC materials to be developed, Campaigning, Wall painting etc. to be done at village level for building awareness on FNHW activities.
- i. Village Organization (VO) to monitor various services such as PDS, THR, Hot cooked meal provided by AWCs, Growth monitoring at AWC, quality of Mid Day Meal, Health Services etc.
- j. Village organizations to regularly discuss and take up various activities on FNHW along with reviewing of such activities.
- k. CLFs/VOs to actively plan for the Special SHGs members promoted and specifically look for promoting good behaviors related to SBCC.
- l. Awareness Building by the CBOs on Menstrual Health & Hygiene with the adolescence Girls by organizing *Kishori Divas, Kishori Sabhas in CLF as a camp mode etc.*
 - a) Village Organization (VO) to plan for celebration of birth of girl child by planting of commercial trees as *Ejupi Gaspuli*, a state specific initiative. Connect the same with "Sukanya Samridhi" Yojna
- m. In addition, activities under Poshan Abhiyan, Campaigns like Yoga Day, Gender Campaign etc. shall be observed.

1.6. **Convergence**

- a. CLF/VO and SHG members will raise awareness on Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Day (VHSND) and also actively participate in planning meetings, mobilization of eligible members and their family members to attend VHSND.
- b. Efforts shall be made to enhance participation of ASHA and AWW, PRI Representatives in VO meetings with the 52 weeks agenda as per the Annexure-I.
- c. CLFs/ VOs to organize Health Camp in convergence with Health Department.
- d. CLF/ VO members to raise awareness on ICDS and ensure proper monitoring of Anganwadi Centers, Quality of Mid-Day Meal etc.
- e. CLFs/VOs to play a crucial role in ensuring delivery of various entitlements & services related to FNHW.
- f. CLF/VOs to plan to adopt the Anganwadi Centers for proper maintenance and functioning of the AWCs.
- g. Models of Integrated Agri-Nutri Garden, Livestock Rearing and SBCC for promoting diet diversity, FNHW enterprises and Gender Aspects implemented in the immersion sites.
- h. Agri Nutri Gardens are being promoted and immersion Sites Blocks to be saturated with a nutrition garden and/or livestock rearing, as per the space available along with the Farm Livelihoods team.
- i. Active participation of SHG Members/ Cadres/ Leaders in Gram Sabhas and GPDP, representation in committees such as SMC, VHSNC, etc for implementation of various initiatives, as well as actively participate in other Departmental activities like Poshan Month, Poshan Pakhwada, Yoga Day etc.
- j. CLF/VOs to plan and generate awareness on Safe drinking water, Sanitation & Hygienic practices as well as scientific waste management under JJM & SBM 2.0
- k. Annual Action Plan developed in Model CLFs on FNHW as per the visioning Exercise done to be initiated and also placed at Gram Sabhas through VPRP.

1.7. **FNHW Enterprises:**

- a. Different types of FNHW Enterprise as per need and geography may be undertaken.
- b. At least one type of FNHW Enterprise in Farm, Non farm, etc may be undertaken in

- Immersion Site, at any level – CLF, VO or SHG Non-Farm team in the AAP.
- c. Enterprise related to Solid & Waste Management under SBM 2 in convergence with local Panchayats may be done.
- d. Possibility of convergence with Line Departments for promotion of FNHW Enterprise may be explored
- e. Special initiative may be undertaken in promoting enterprise based on the traditional knowledge, skills, expertise of the Special SHG members (Elderly, PwD, etc).

2. **Major focus areas of ASRLM under the FNHW Component:**

- a. Awareness Building of all the SHG members on SBCC related to FNHW
- b. Addressing the FNHW related issues of SHG members and children in particular of the community.
- c. Capacity Building of the VO/CLF Leaders, Cadres on SBCC aspects of FNHW
- d. Ensuring Various Entitlements & Services related to FNHW received by the target groups.
- e. Successful convergence by the CLFs/VOs with PRI & Line departments for effective implementation and monitoring of services.
- f. Increase participation and representation in decision making platforms of the village/panchayat/Block level process.
- g. Development and promotion of FNHW based enterprises by the SHG members.

3. **Target Groups:**

The universe for FNHW integration interventions is all SHG members and their households from the selected geography. Amongst them, the following target groups will be focused on priority basis:

- a. Pregnant women
- b. Lactating mothers (mothers of children under 2 years of age)
- c. Adolescent girls
- d. Women of the reproductive age group
- e. Women who have surpassed menopause and elderly women
- f. Other Special SHG members, if any

4. **Monitoring & Evaluation Activities**

- a. Data on identified FNHW indicators shall be collected on a regular basis. Data Transmission chain from ground to District level should be clearly established while ensuring its completeness and validity and Monthly Progress Report sheet should be updated by the 5th of every month.
- b. Mechanisms to review all activities at each level shall be in place and reviews need to be conducted regularly. In this regard
 - CLF EC and SACs to review VO's in monthly meeting
 - Grading of CBOs to be done on FNHW Parameters.
 - Block Coordinators to review CLFs in monthly meeting
 - BPMs to review BCs in monthly meeting
 - DPMs to review BPMs and BCs in monthly meeting
 - SPM to review DPMs and DFEs in every quarter/ whenever required.
- c. Baseline study to be conducted to assess the impact of the interventions as per the state identified areas along with indicators on Food security at the Household level, diet diversity/adequacy for women and Children etc, and also provide analytical data on the role of Community Based organization (CBOs) in promoting Good behavior & Practices related to FNHW. A mid-line and end-line study shall also be conducted in the consecutive years.

5. Checklist for developing an Immersion Site under Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission:

i. Social Mobilization & Capacity Building Activities

- a. Staff and Cadre trained and deployed at all levels.
- b. District Nodal Persons for FNHW to be selected.
- c. Training of CLFs (CLF-EC/SAC) to be done
- d. Training of all VOs and SHGs to be done through a ToT of the CLF Leaders.
- e. All the resource material required for SBCC, VHSND etc. should be adapted and shared with community institutions for reference.
- f. All the activities described above under System Strengthening, SBCC, Convergence and FNHW enterprises should be implemented from District to HH level. In addition additional activities like *Poshan Abhiyaan*, *Yoga Day*, *National Gender Campaign*, *Amrit Brikha Andolan* etc. should be observed.
- g. Action Plan to be developed in all CLFs as per the Visioning 3 Module under Model CLFs.
- h. Participation of ASHA and AWW, PRI members in VO meetings with FNHW agenda already shared.
- i. Participation of SHG members (CRP, SAC, EC) members in Convergence Forums like VHSND, Gram Sabha, VPRP, VRP, "Naari Xurokha Kokh" etc.

ii. Farm Livelihoods

- a. Models of integrated Agri-Nutri Garden to be developed
- b. Models of Integrated Agri-Horticulture to be developed in homestead land
- c. Every Household to take up Livestock as per the secondary livelihood activity
- d. Promotion of Millet based food enterprise for increased awareness on millets & dietary diversity.
- e. Moringa Plantation to be done intensively and different variety of moringa based food products to be developed.
- f. Consumption of animal protein to be promoted as a part of diet diversity.
- g. Promotion of Natural Farming methodologies and use of organic manure and pesticides
- h. Promotion of one Organic Outlet which will cover Diet Diversity aspect, health and nutrition aspect. The Organic Outlet should be properly opened with business plan and monitored properly by the Block about its cost economics.
- i. Promotion of Seed Bank for Indigenous crop varieties by CBOs or in convergence with Agriculture/horticulture Deptt.
- j. One Egg Cluster per Block for addressing the nutritional aspects
- k. Seeds packeting for ANG and Nursery for various crops.
- l. Custom Hiring Centre (CHC) focusing on improved and scientific methods of agriculture as well as promoting drudgery reduction agri-equipments.
- m. One Non-Pesticidal Management (NPM) outlets and farm input shops may be made available locally.
- n. Vermi Compost unit for promoting organic cultivation may be done at local level
- o. Considering the nutrient content of milk, dairy rearing and value addition in various milk products may be undertaken.
- p. Seasonal crop calendar may be developed considering the nutritional value and availability.

iii. Non -Farm Livelihoods

- a. FNHW enterprises should be promoted as per AAP Target.
- b. Business plan and monthly report to be collected from the Enterprise Efforts should be for promoting more remunerative Models.

- c. As a part of Non-Farm & FNHW joint activity Sanitary Napkin Unit can be promoted and awareness should be given on it as a VO level monthly meeting.
- d. Marketing of FNHW products through Social-Media, Online Marketing Platform.

iv. Financial Inclusion

- a. Bank Account opening to be ensured for all the SHG Members.
- b. Financial Literacy Training to all sub-committee members of VOs & CLFs
- c. Insurance to be done for all the SHG members, i.e.; (PMJJBY & PMSBY)
- d. Insurance Claim to be ensured.
- e. Awareness to enroll SHG members under Atal Pension Yojna
- f. Promoting Digital Financial Transaction amongst SHG members for timely & door step delivery of services.

v. Gender

- a. All the CLFs/VOs to receive basic Gender Training
- b. '*Naari Xurakha Kokh*' to be functionalized in all the CLFs
- c. All the SHGs to have trained Gender Point Person.
- d. All the VOs to form GPP Mancha and functional SAC.
- e. Provision of Gender Resource Centre in selected blocks as per need and maturity of the Block
- f. Creating of Gender Fund in all the CLFs
- g. CLF/VO to leaders along with "*Naari Xurokhya Kokh* to promote a women & Child friendly village which will be Violence/Alcohol/tobacco/drugs free.

v. MIS & M&E

- a. A Baseline study shall be conducted to assess the impact of the interventions as per the state identified areas along with indicators on Food security at the Household level, diet diversity/adequacy for women and Children etc. A mid-line and end-line study shall also be conducted in the consecutive years.
- b. Monthly monitoring to be done through MPR which will be submitted by the Blocks.
- c. Review mechanisms to properly maintained.

vi. Other

- a) Implement the "State Operational Strategy" namely "*Pustinidhi*" thoroughly. All the CLFs under the Blocks will be thoroughly trained with the help of UNICEF Assam.
- b) **Drinking water and Sanitation** facility should be made available in all BMMUs in convergence with JJM/SBM-G
- c) **Drinking water and Sanitation** facility should be made available in all **CLF offices** under the Block wherever available, in convergence with JJM/SBM-G. Otherwise CLF should build its own facility.
- d) **Drinking water and Sanitation** facility should be made available in all **VO offices**, wherever available, under the Block in convergence with JJM/SBM-G
- e) A **breast-feeding unit** to be set up in all CLF offices/VO offices wherever space is available.
- f) Basic **Waste Disposal Mechanisms** should be prepared. .
- g) SHG members should be a part of the VHSNC.
- h) Organizing **BMI & Health Camps** for the Pregnant women, Lactating mothers, Adolescent girls, Women of the reproductive age group, elderly women, etc.
- i) **Wall writings** as a part of SBCC activities should be clearly visible in local languages.

- Eye catchy proverbs should be used in this regard.
- j) Each member should ensure that an individual sanitary toilet is built & used by all members of the household
 - k) CBO members should practice 6 steps of hand washing before starting of the meeting.
 - l) Use of **Vulnerability Reduction Fund** judiciously by the VOs for FNHW activities.
 - m) Use of FNHW Tool Kit as a trainer manual for FNHW activities.
 - n) One Block Level “**Adult Education**” Centre should be promoted as per the feasibility of the Block.
 - o) Tobacco and Alcohol-Free villages under the Blocks. If it is found that one of the major income of SHG members is to prepare alcohol and sell, then the option may be provided to support them with alternate livelihood options.

6. Financial Provisions:

Budgetary Provisions for Development of FNHW Immersion sites at Block Level							
SN	Components	Unit Description	Number	Rate Per Unit	Amount per CLF (Rs.)	Number of CLF/Block	Total Amount (Rs.)
A	System Strengthening (SS)	To be supported under Capacity Building (CB) budget				312 CLFs	
B	Convergence						
B.1	Organizing Health/BMI Camps for the Pregnant women, Lactating mothers, Adolescent girls, Women of the reproductive age group, elderly women, People with mental health condition etc. of the SHG women	Camp	5	2,000.00	10,000.00	4	40,000.00
C	FNHW Enterprise	To be supported under Non-Farm Interventions					-
D	Socio Behavioral Change & Communication (SBCC)						
D.1	Development of Institutional Agri-Nutri Garden/Development of Seed Bank/Seedling Resource Centre/NPM Shop etc.	Number	1	10,000.00	10,000.00	4	40,000.00

D.2	Painting of FNHW Theme at CLF / VO office	Lumpsum	10,000.00	4	40,000.00
D.3	Wall Painting	Lumpsum	10,000.00	4	40,000.00
D.4	Solid Liquid Waste Management unit set up	Lumpsum	5,000.00	4	20,000.00
D.5	Establishment of “Adult Education” centre	Lumpsum	20,000.00	1	20,000.00
	Total Budget		50,000.00	4	2,00,000.00