Agriculture Entrepreneurship Promotion Scheme-2018

Operational Guideline

APICOL

(The Agricultural Promotion & Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited),

Department of Agriculture and farmers Empowerment,

Government of Odisha

CONTENTS

Abbreviations and Definitions

a) "AEPS" means Agriculture Entrepreneurship Promotion scheme launched in year 2018 by Department of Agriculture and Farmer's Empowerment, Government of Odisha

b) "APICOL" means Agricultural Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited which is the nodal agency for implementing the AEPS

c) "Partner agency" means Agency identified by APICOL to implement AEPS in PPP mode

d) "BLO" means Block Level Officers constituted of officer from government's departments for agriculture and allied activities at block level

e) "AE/AEs" means Agri-entrepreneur/Agri-entrepreneurs identified under AEPS for taking up micro-enterprises and become value chain actors

f) "AE Hub" means Agri Entrepreneur Hub set up under AEPS at Bhubaneswar by APICOL with the support of partner agency to facilitate and support AE's development.

g) "CBO" means Community Based Organisation set up with representation of community members such as SHG federation, Producer group, Farmer's Producer Company/Organisation, Mutually Aided Cooperative Society, LAMPCS

h) "RoR" means Records of Revenue issued buy department of revenue

i) "State Coordination Committee" is committee constituted at state level under AEPS, chaired by Principal Secretary, Dept. of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment and convened by MD APICOL

j) "District Coordination Committee" is the committee constituted at district level under AEPS, convened by Chief District Agriculture Officer/Deputy Director Agriculture of the district

k) "Block Review and monitoring committee" is committee constituted at block level under AEPS, convened by convener of BLO to monitor progress of the scheme

1. Introduction

Agriculture sector in Odisha faces many challenges such as low productivity, high level of climatic uncertainties, low irrigation access, poor credit linkages and improper market linkage. Further, small holder farmers are trapped in a vicious cycle of low earnings and indebtedness. Farmers are already dealing with major risks associated with production. Improving farming and thereby enhancing the income of smallholder farmers require creation of resilient ecosystems. At the same time the educated youth of farming communities are aspiring for higher incomes from farming.

In this background, the state government launched the scheme **"Agriculture Entrepreneurship Promotion Scheme 2018"**, on 13th November 2018 to groom at least 1000 rural Agriculture Entrepreneurs (AEs) in coming three years to provide quality agricultural inputs and technological services including modern farm equipments and marketing assurances to farmers of the state. The scheme was launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha during Agri Business Management session at the Make in Odisha Conclave 2018.

According to the scheme, a value chain enabler is proposed at GP/Block level which will take the onus for helping farmers by providing quality inputs, facilitate synchronizing production and marketing by creating a crop calendar and helps in troubleshooting of the farmers. This will help small holders realize cost reduction, better production, more profit and simultaneously in return, the value chain enabler draws a transaction-based income from different services. Such value chain enablers will be termed as Agri-Entrepreneurs (AEs). This is a unique scheme where AEs will be systematically groomed for providing farm based services in rural areas especially to SHG based institutions, Farmer producer organizations, common interest groups, user groups and small and marginal farmers of the locality.

Under the scheme, it is planned to groom the Agri Entrepreneurs of 40 tribal dominated blocks in 12 districts to earn in the range of Rs. 2 lakh to 6 lakh per annum at the end of project period by providing agricultural services to around 2 lakh farmers and become a value chain actor in the area who will inspire rural youths to enter into agri and allied sector ventures.

2. Objective

- Developing 1000 rural youth, women and men as Agri-Entrepreneurs who will earn Rs 2 lakh to 6 lakh from their services and
- Supplementing efforts of extension by facilitating prime agricultural services for local agricultural communities through Agri- Entrepreneurs which would result in increase in income of around 200,000 small and marginal farmers.

3. Deliverables

o Selection and training of 1000 Agri-Entrepreneurs.
o All AEs will set up enterprises relevant for their area and provide services to at least 150-250 farmers each.
o Building ecosystem around the major trades identified.
o Linking AE with existing relevant schemes (e.g. MKUY, MIDH, etc) in the field of agriculture, horticulture, ARD, fisheries and food processing.
o Increase in income and productivity of the farmers.
o Setting and running of AE Hub.

Following table shows key performance indicators and stages of progress during project period

Sr no	Key performance indicators	Stages of progress with timeline
1	70% of AEs have scored above 50 % in the post training evaluation	After completion of the training a) First 7 months: 400 AEs to be selected and trained b) 8- 12 months: Rest 600 AEs to be selected and trained c) 8-12 months: Business plan preparation for 1000 AEs d) 13-24 months: Business plan execution of 1000 AEs
2	700 AEs are providing services around agriculture and allied activities to at least 100 farmers each	a) 25- 30 months: 700 AEs are providing services to at least 50 farmer each b) 31-36 months: 700 AEs are providing services to at least 100 farmers each
3	700 AEs are earning at least Rs 2 Lakh/annum from the activity and out of them 100 AEs will earn in the range of Rs 6 Lakh in sustained manner	a) 26-30 months: 700 AEs are earning at least Rs 1 Lakh during six months from the activity and out of them 100 AEs earning in the range of Rs 3 Lakh in sustained manner during the said 6 months period b) 31-36 months: 700 AEs are earning at least Rs 2 Lakh/annum from the activity and 100 AEs will earn in the range of Rs 6 Lakh in sustained manner
4	1,20,000 no. of farmers have increased income (30% increase) and increased	a) 25-30 months: 60,000 no. of farmers have increased income

productivity of around 2 lakh households (small and marginal farmers) due to such services	(15% increase) and increased productivity of around 1 lakh households (small and marginal farmers) due to such services b) 31 -36 months: 1,20,000 no. of farmers have increased income (30% increase) and increased productivity of around 2 lakh households (small and marginal farmers) due to such services

4. Defining Agri- entrepreneur (AE) in the scheme

Agri-entrepreneurs under the scheme will work with 150-250 farmers in a cluster with a mutuality of local community institutions. While they may specialise in their trades, mostly they will act as a one stop resource / solution provider for the agricultural needs of small and marginal farmers. They will possess characters of social enterprises by providing required services to the farmers in her/his vicinity and develop into a sustainable enterprise sharing areas of mutual growth with the farmers. AEs will provide following types of services to the farmers.

- o better quality inputs
- o knowledge and crop advice
- o mechanisation services
- o primary processing and linking farmer to market

Additionally, some AEs will also provide services for livestock rearing and fisheries where ever possible to augment farmer's livelihood. Similarly, some AEs will take up selected enterprises only as per the requirements and opportunity in the area and become MEs.

5. Operational Area

In the first phase, the scheme will be taken up in tribal dominated 12 districts covering 40 blocks of the state. These blocks have been identified considering the extent of social mobilisation, focus on promoting high value crops and plan for promoting AEs in these regions by Agriculture & FE Department.

S.N	Districts	No. of Blocks	Name of the Block
1	Rayagada	4	Bisamkatak, Kolnara, Muniguda ,K singhpur
2	Kandhamal	3	Phulbanisadar, Balliguda, Nuagaon
3	Mayurbhanj	4	Jashipur, Karanjia, Thakurmunda, Khunta
4	Koraput	8	Boriguma, Dasmantpur, Semiliguda, Pottangi, Nandapur, Lamptaput, Boipariguda, Kundra
5	Keonjhar	5	Jhumpura, Patana, Banspal, Harichandanpur, Keonjhar sadar

6	Kalahandi	3	Lanjigarh, Thuamul Rampur, Golamunda
7	Dhenkanal	1	Kankadahad
8	Jharsuguda	2	Laikera, Kulabira
9	Sambalpur	2	Jamankira, Kuchinda
10	Bolangir	5	Belpada, Khaprakhol, Bangomunda, Tureikela, Muribahal
11	Nuapada	2	Khariar , Boden
12	Boudh	1	Kantamal
TOTAL	12	40	

6. Implementation of AEPS

The scheme implementation will comprise of following activities

6.a. Setting up AE Hub and training centre

6.b. Setting up of Project Management Unit (PMU)

6.c. Selection of AE

   6.c. i.   Identification of AE

   6.c.ii.   Selection of AE

   6.c.iii.   Registration of AE

6.d. Training of AE

6.e. Incubation of AE

6.f. Performing of AE

6.g. Functioning of AE- Hub

6.a. Setting up AE Hub and training centres

o APICOL will set up an AE hub with support from Partner Agency. Govt will provide Infrastructure for the AE-Hub.
o Partner agency will place requisite numbers of professionally qualified and adequately experienced personnel in the AE hub.
o Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN) is selected as partner agency for setting up AE hub under the scheme through a RFP process by APICOL.
o PRADAN is a national level NGO with its registered office at 3, Community Shopping Centre, Niti Bag, New Delhi-49, currently working in 7 states across central Indian plateau and eastern plateau regions.
o PRADAN is a not for profit entity registered under Society's Registration Act 1860, and exempted in IT laws under 12 AA, and it receives development funds in the form of grants. Accordingly, the agency may claim its cost of placing staffs in AE hub against the agreement value in the signed MoU as per the approved cost norms.
o AE hub will support APICOL in identifying, training and incubation of AEs.
o AE hub will create mechanism to provide support to AEs in establishing their business, linking them with key stakeholders and enabling AEs for extension services to farmers.
o It is visualised that gradually AE-Hub will evolve into an independent entity for supporting activities of AEs by the end of the project period.

o Partner agency will identify training institutions such as Universities/ Institutes/ training facilities like COE,H-Deras and other training institutes under Directorate of Horticulture, NRRI- ICAR (Cuttack), OFMRDC / SLFMTTC/ IMAGE/RITES, DA & FP (Bhubaneswar), CHES/ CTCRI/ CIFA/ CARI/CPDO/NIEWA-ICAR/ OUAT (Bhubaneswar), NIRD & PR (Hyderabad), Utkal University, Sri Sri University, CUTM, XIMB, KISS/KIIT, IRMA (Anand), IIM-A, IIM-Sambalpur, MANAGE etc. to provide foundation, trade specific trainings. Steps will be taken by APICOL to create special training centres/ Agribusiness incubation centre etc. to train, handhold, incubate and certify the AEs.

o Partner agency along with training institutions shall plan well equipped lab, showcasing models around identified trades, equipments, literature, videos, etc. and avenues that can offer hands-on & experiential training to the entrepreneurs. Partner agency will develop requisite IEC materials for conducting trainings. APICOL will release the funds for developing training centres and IEC materials.

o The foundation course and trade specific training will be imparted in the centralised training centre whereas hand holding and skill based training will be arranged in a decentralised manner in the district/block level.

6.b. Setting up of Project Management Unit (PMU)

APICOL will set up a PMU to implement, review and monitor the project. The proposed   PMU will have following human resources.

1-Project In charge-One person

2-Project Manger- Finance

3-Project Coordinators- 2 persons

4-IT executive-One person

6.c. Selection of AE

Eligibility criteria for Candidates:

The scheme will be open for candidates having following eligibility criteria

- The applicant should be between 18 to 45 years of Age.
- Minimum qualification of the applicant must be 10th Pass; however graduate candidate will be preferred.*
- She/he should be a resident of respective Gram Panchayat** /Block

However preference would be given to the following criteria

- Preference would be given to women candidates.
- Preference to those having possession of 1 acre land and 1000 sq ft of constructed area/area in feasible location for taking up proposed construction activities. The possession can be any among the following categories
  o RoR in own name of the candidate
  o RoR in the name of husband

- o Possesion/Access certificate over forest land/revenue land under FRA/ land alienation of revenue department issued by Revenue Inspector/ Tahasildar or competent authorities
- • If RoR is in the name of family members or others, preference will be given to those who submit an affidavit about further submission of 15 years of registered lease deed in the court of sub-registrar within a maximum period of 90 days

  * In blocks having low literacy - less than 64% female literacy (Average female literacy of state as per census 2011); Deserving women and SC& ST candidate may be considered having 9th Pass qualification.

- ****In case of unavailability of suitable candidate for AE in the respective Gram Panchayat preference will be given to the candidate of nearest villages from adjacent Gram Panchayat and necessarily from the same block.

6.c.i. Identification of AE

- • APICOL with the help of partner agency will disseminate information about the schemes to different community institutions, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), FIAC and other relevant public places. Following methods will be used to create general awareness, publicity and advertisement for the Scheme.
  - o Advertising in relevant local newspapers and publications.
  - o Display of the scheme in PRIs, Block level offices, FIAC, District level offices and other relevant public premises.
  - o Advertising in Local TV, Radio, Mike promotion.
- • Interested candidates may apply in a prescribed form along with identification proofs (Aadhar Card, Farmer Id Card, Voter ID card and Ration card) and a letter of recommendation from CBOs.
- • Relevant Community based Organisations such as SHG federation / FPO/ FPC/ PG/ PACS/ LAMPCS may recommend names of deserving candidates based on their conducts and fulfilment of above mentioned eligibility criteria by the candidates. In absence of such CBOs, Block level officers such as CDPO, Block level officers of OLM/ Mission Shakti/BDO may issue letter of recommendation.

6.c.ii. Selection of AE

Block level Convener of ATMA committee will conduct the selection process under the guidance of APICOL and headed by a District Level Officer of Agriculture or allied departments.

Following standardised processes will be conducted for selecting the candidate.

Selection process

o   Block level ATMA convener will conduct the selection process associated with at least other two BLOs (BAO/AAO, AHO, BVO/AVAS, AFO), representative from AE Hub and representative from APICOL- PMU.

o   APICOL along with AE Hub will design question sheet and issue necessary directive for fair selection of Agri-entrepreneurs at block level.

o   The final list of selected candidates will be approved by block level ATMA committee.

o   In case a suitable candidate is not selected in the particular GP and alternatively a suitable candidate is selected from the adjacent/nearby GP then her/his candidature is to approved by District level ATMA committee.

The selection process will be conducted in one day and it will include following 3 sections.

Sections	Type of test	Coverage	Remark for selection
Eligibility test	Standard bio data form	Checking as per the eligibility criteria	Screening
Written Test	Entrepreneurial Test	• Psychological Profiling (Prioritisation of investment and decision making skills) • Entrepreneurial orientation Inventory (Ratios of internal /external locus of control) • Entrepreneurial Skill quiz (Attributes and attitude related to entrepreneurship)	Short list candidate as per the consolidated score in all the tests
	Basic Arithmetic Test	• Numerical test (Std VII level) • Arithmetic test (Std VII level)	
	Agriculture & allied knowledge Test	• Basic Agriculture Test	
Group Discussion	Emotional & Social maturity mapping	• Group Discussion • Sociometry (Participatory assessment)	Shortlist candidate based on scores of Written and Group Discussion

Individual Interview	Validation of information collected		Interviewers assessment

6.c.iii. Registration of AE

- Once the list of AEs is approved by the committee at block level, APICOL will issue an offer letter to selected candidates and open an online portal for registration of selected candidates.
- Selected candidate would be required to accept the offer letter by registering themselves on online portal and submission of an enrolment fee of Rs. 5000/- with APICOL.
- The enrolment fee will be refunded to candidates after completion of training and incubation period and if the candidate leaves midway the enrolment fee will be forfeited. The fee may be revised by APICOL from time to time.
- The enrolment fee will be refunded to candidates after successful completion of training and incubation period and the interest accrued will be deposited in a separate account by APICOL. MD, APICOL may be authorised to take measures to utilise the amount for development of the AE Hub.
- The selected candidate (AEs) will sign an agreement in stamp paper with the Executing Agency in prescribed format to work for the entire project period failing which she/he would undertake to refund the training and incubation cost incurred over them.
- Selected candidates will be required to upload all the required documents of eligibility and while enrolling them on online portal.

6.d. Training of AE

The **objective of training to AE** is

Broad objective:

To harness Agri- entrepreneurs as a change agent (by being a role model) of the society for transformation in agriculture sector.

At the end of the training, AEs will be able

- To understand about Entrepreneur, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
- To trigger entrepreneurial spirit and imbibe entrepreneurial behaviour
- To become sensitized about opportunities for growth
- To enhance their skills in formulating business plan and implementation
- To strengthen their knowledge on farm based livelihoods
- To improve their functional competences for running sustainable enterprise
- To enrich their experiences through exposure and interactions

- To be able to set up an enterprise who can provide services to 150-250 farmers around them

Training architecture

APICOL with support from partner agency will identify training institutions, develop training modules for general and trade specific training sessions and identify resource persons for conducting the training

- Training institutions will be identified in such a way that they may meet the logistic requirements for conducting the trainings and provide certification for the trainees.

- AEPS will also be converged with existing Government's schemes and training provisions of other line departments/Institutions for conducting training, capacity building and exposure visits of AEs.

- Training of entrepreneurs will be subjected to more of triggering entrepreneurial values and wisdom. The training module should provide AEs wide range of exposure to knowledge, practical learning and live inspirational understandings by meeting the real entrepreneurs.

- Each participant would be provided with a Tab before beginning of the trainings. It will facilitate them to access IT based IEC materials, storage of their learning from the trainings and assessment and evaluation of the training outcomes.

- The training will be conducted in three phases along with inter-phase assignment

  o Foundation- It will be introductory phase to help AEs identify their entrepreneurial abilities and skills, understanding the scheme, livelihoods and basics of agriculture and allied activities and introduction to business plan. Exposure to successful entrepreneurs and enterprises will be conducted in this phase to help the AE visualise viable enterprises in their context.

  o Trade specific- It will be second phase of training when the AEs would have come along with ready hand experiences of business opportunity in their areas by mapping the needs of the farmers studying the value chain of scalable activities in their area. This phase will help AEs to sharpen their entrepreneurial abilities around the activities and trades chosen by them. Trade specific exposures will be conducted to help the AEs come up with implementable business plan.

o Handholding support- After trade specific training each AE will go though incubation and performing stages. A block level decentralised arrangement is proposed in the scheme to handhold the AEs in various activities in these stages.

Following table is an overview of different phases of trainings

Sr.no.	Phase	Module	Coverage	Days
1	Phase 1	Introduction, Objective of programme	Introduction session & Expectation mapping, Introduction of the scheme, Importance of the training programme and Introduction to the course, Norms setting for the entire Phase one training	7
		Entrepreneurship Motivation Training,	Understanding enterprise and its environment, Enhancing risk taking abilities and analytical problem solving, Understanding entrepreneurial attitude and attribute of entrepreneur	
		Basics of business planning	Discovering business and managing business, Fundamentals of business planning	
		Exposure	Exposure to successful enterprises and incubation centres	3
		Learning integration	Integrating learning from exposure	
		Understanding livelihoods	Understanding livelihood framework – 5 As-Assets, Ability, Access, Assurance, Attitude, 5 Js- Jana, Jangal, Jamin, Jaanwar, Jal	14
		Basics to agronomy and livestock	Crop production methodology, Soil-plant-seed- water- nutrition relationship, Plant Nutrition, Role of micro nutrients, Concept of organic farming and its importance, Basic principles in irrigation, Integrated pest, disease and weed management, Farm Implements and machinery, rain fed farming & Agro ecological situation,	

			Understanding life cycles of goat and poultry, Understanding diseases of goat and poultry bird and its preventive and curative measures	
		Feasibility framework	Understanding factors of feasibility for business development.	
Inter-phase assignments				
2	Phase 2	Business planning	Understanding cost economics of trade, How to make DPR, Setting up expenditure and income targets, Understanding capital and its sources, Knowing market mechanisms	
		Trade specific exposure	Understanding value chain of selected trades	
		Farm Mechanisation	Importance of farm mechanisation; Farm machinery and their purpose of Use during entire value chain of production,	14
		Trade specific trainings	Detailed understanding of the selected trade of AE, Knowing about factors of production, Finalising activities, Understanding integration of AEs activities with other activities,	
		Government schemes and applications	Knowing about various government schemes related to selected trade of AE, How to explore about govt. schemes and policy, Application procedure, Follow-up of application	
Inter-phase assignments				
3	Phase 3	Assessment of business plan, Field based training/ handholding and introduction to incubation and performing stages	Decentralised periodic review of AEs business plan, On field demo, Networking between AEs, Accessing support from AE hub and other ecosystem measures provided under the scheme	16
		Total		54

- Additionally, there will be sessions on enhancing social skill, IT skills and other skills for AEs by the end of training sessions each day by organising quizzes, games and extra-curricular activities.
- Identification of Resource person

  o APICOL would empanel the Resource persons for imparting training around general and trade specific sessions in the central training events. Resource persons will be identified among faculty members or empanelled Resource persons of reputed institutions such as NIRD/ SIRD/ OLM/ Mission Shakti/ OUAT/ ATMA/ MANAGE/ IMAGE/ KVK/ ICAR institutes/ Government Universities and similar institutions of repute, other Research Institutes/Organisations of GoI/ GoO/ Officers, Retired Officers of GoI/ GoO/, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) practitioners having proven track record of conducting such trainings. Grading of Resource persons shall be done by taking reference from accepted grading norms of above mentioned institutions.

  o Partner agency would facilitate the identification and empanelment process of Resource person by developing the empanelment procedures depending upon the needs under training module and will conduct the empanelment procedures along with APICOL.

  o Training institutions would sign an agreement with the empanelled Resource persons to avail their services.

  o Additionally, APICOL would empanel at least two Resource persons for each project blocks for on field training and hand holding support to AEs.

  o At one occasion one of the empanelled Block Resource persons would be engaged on trainee day basis.

  o Each AE would go through 16 trainee days of on field training and hand holding support by them. The trainee days for each AE will be planned in such a manner that the AE can avail on field support from Block resource persons during entire incubation and performing stages.

  o The block resource person (BRP) will closely mentor the AE through their respective business plans and conduct intermediary review of the same.

  o Each Block Resource person would coordinate with around 25 no. of Agri-entrepreneur in respective block. He/she will report directly to AE-Hub. He/she will maintain a training log book for extension to AEs at field level.

o Block Resource person plays an important role in contextualising the efforts of AE for setting up their enterprise. So, capable and experienced individuals will be identified to mentor the AEs in local contexts.

o The criteria for selection of Block resource person is as following.

Eligibility criteria for selection of Block Resource Persons:

Graduate in Agriculture and allied sciences with minimum 1 year of post qualification experience in training and capacity building in Govt./NGO/Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
   (Or)
Diploma in Agriculture and allied sciences with minimum 2 years of post qualification experience in training and capacity building in Govt./NGO/Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
   (Or)
Graduate in any stream with minimum 5 years of relevant post qualification experience in training and capacity building in Govt./NGO/Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
   (Or)
Post Graduate in Rural Management/Agri-business Management/Social work/Forest Management or equivalent from a recognized institute with minimum 2 years of relevant post qualification experience in training and capacity building in Govt./NGO/Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Other skills/competencies required
- Good training skills
- Competency in usage of IT tools including MS Office suite.
- Working knowledge of accounts and book keeping
- Good at community mobilisation

o The detailed honorarium and other cost norms for the services of Resource persons will be developed by APICOL along with partner agency. The letters/orders issued by respective institutions of the Resource persons will be considered for the purpose.

o All Resource persons selected for centralised training and block level handholding will go through Training of Trainers (TOTs) for attaining required uniformity in the delivery of trainings.

o APICOL will issue a detailed training manual which will include roles and credentials required for training institutions and resource persons, detailed

training modules and inter-phase assignments, evaluation methodology and best practices with respect to conducting trainings under AEPS.

Training certification

A gazette notification of Ministry of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmer's welfare, GoI has mandated for 15 days certificate course from any State agriculture university or Krishi Vigyan Kendra or National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) or National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD & PR), Fertiliser Association of India and other certifying agencies approved by government to avail the seed and fertilizer licence.

Accordingly, any agency among above mentioned certification agencies will be identified under the scheme for certification of AEs. An AE will obtain the certificate after successful completion of criteria fulfilled by her/him as mentioned in the training manual.

6.e. Incubation of AE (Around 12 months period)

Incubation is a critical phase for the growth of the entrepreneurs. APICOL with support from AE Hub will help AEs to conduct following activities in this regard.

Preparation of business plan: After the training it is expected that AE will come up with a business plan by assessing the opportunity in her/his area. Business plan will include details about the activities, volume, capital investments requirement and rate of returns of the chosen activities by the AE. It will be associated with a Detailed Project Report of each of the activities chosen by them which will help AE keep track of their expenditures and sources of funds at each stage of business development.

Supporting to avail finance: APICOL and AE hub will together make mechanisms for easy access for credit to AEs. AE would mobilize finance from bank, OLM, MUDRA loan or any other institutions to take up the planned activities.

Linking with CBOs for better functioning: AE would build linkages with the existing institutions (PG/FPO/CBO) to provide quality products and services as per their requirements. Such institutions will help AEs to establish connection with farmers. AEs can also come into formal agreements with such institutions to address seasonality, trends in their trades to increase predictability of their business volume, simultaneously providing services at affordable rates to farmers using economies of scale.

Incubation cost: An incubation cost totalling up to Rs 60,000 each AE would be offered to help AE by APICOL for smooth transition into the business during 12 months of incubation

period. This will be released to AEs based on the milestones achieved against the business plan by the respective AEs.

Availing licence and other legal provisions: This business would require seed and fertilizer licence and conformity to other regulation of governments. AE hub will make mechanisms for providing such information to AEs. APICOL will coordinate with government departments for fulfilling such needs of AEs.

Convergence of the relevant schemes and its mechanism: The trade chosen by AEs will require initial capital investments. A part of capital investments can be mobilised by accessing various schemes of governments departments which are meant for development of farming and farmers. AE hub will facilitate convergence of schemes of various departments with support from APICOL to avail AE with required resources to conduct their activities. A detailed convergence mechanism is mentioned in a later section.

Ecosystem support: AEs need to be linked with various stakeholders for availing quality inputs, agri-equipment maintenance support, market information, etc. Each trade will have exclusive set of ecosystem actors and AE hub will provide necessary ecosystem support to AEs invariably around
o Loan linkage from Banks
o Private actors for quality input and marketing
o Information and data base services
o Network of AEs & AE Hub
o Farmer producer organisations

6.f. Performing of AE: Around 9 months (At least one cropping cycle)

In this phase without much of administrative support AEs would be implementing the plan and earning revenues as per her business plan.

Followings are **indicative lists** of activities which AE will select based on the context, her interest and business plan. She/he will take up such activities for providing services and having assured earning.

Sr. No	Trade	Specialisation
1	General Agro Service Centre	1. Providing quality agriculture inputs(Seed& Fertilizer) 2. Support in farming to ensure better production 3. Arranging logistics and Marketing of Produce 4. Agri –Mechanisation Services a. Agro Service centre b. Linking with Common Facility Centre of OLM

		c. Individual implements

		5. Vermi-composting/ Composting for providing quality compost in the area
		6. Fruit tree seedling nursery
		7. Hardening of TC plants
		8. AEs can run smaller solar powered cold storages on a pay-per-use basis for local farmers as and where there is a need. A loan and/or subsidy can be provided to these AEs to set-up small cold storages.
		9. AEs can partner with companies / Start ups around following ideas
		   a. Conducting pilot test of company's products in their area. AEs can charge a fixed amount of fees to participate in the pilot test while the risks of pilots are covered by the companies.
		   b. AEs can procure and rent out farm equipment and post-production machineries. A special price can be worked out with manufacturers supplying them to AEs.
		   c. AEs can also work as sales agent for empanelled manufacturers of large farm equipment to earn incentive.
		10. AEs & MEs can work together to reverse supply crops / products of farmers to large businesses/ E-commerce at a fair price.

2	Seed production	HYV, Open pollinated and hybrid Seed production
3	Mushroom spawn production and services	Spawn production and services to mushroom farmer and related linkages
4	Goat breeder farm and Vet. Services	Goat Breeder farm, vaccination, de-worming and goat keeping
5	Poultry breeder farm and Vet. Services	Poultry Breeder Farm, vaccination and bird keeping
6	Fingerling production	Fish seed rearing/ Fingerling/Yearling rearing

AE would plan in a manner so that she/he can earn at least Rs.2 Lakh annually with a potential to earn Rs.6 Lakh.

6.g. Functioning of AE Hub

1) AE- Hub would ensure the roles designated to partner agency during the project period

2) AE-Hub is a virtual hub that acts like a master distributor for the AEs through Master Entrepreneurs.

3) Similar to GeM (Government E-Marketplace), the state level Agri-e-hub empanels manufacturer of equipment, machineries, inputs etc. to supply good quality products / services at a highly competitive price to AEs either directly or through Master Entrepreneurs and/or FPOs.

4) Agri-Start-ups from the state and the country may also get empanelled on this hub to access the large network of AEs and even larger market through them.

5) The AE-Hub may be the place to connect, ask questions and rate products of different supplier to help each other. It will be ICT enabled and a mobile app of the AE-Hub can be developed to be accessed by all stakeholders.

6) Initially Government would support to set up this hub, however later on it will earn revenues by bringing in private actors and transacting through the AEs.

7) All stakeholders including the empanelled suppliers, master entrepreneurs and Agri-entrepreneurs would pay subscription fees to access products/services of standard quality at competitive cost. These fees can be used to maintain and update the virtual AE-Hub regularly with assistance from Government.

AE Hub would facilitate value addition and market linkage as commercial function for AEs. The key linkages include the following activities

o Credit/Financial linkage- An AE would require a credit linkage in the range of Rs 50,000 to Rs. 2 lakh to meet its working capital requirements and sustainably run its business. Appropriate mechanisms will be developed by AE hub along with APICOL to facilitate credit facilities to AE from Banks and NBFCs.

o Input Supply- AE-Hub would act as Distributor or C & F for input that is indented by AEs.

o Technical support- AE hub would link AEs with different Technical Resources for mobilizing new practices or technology.

o Output linkage- AE hub would help AEs in marketing of produce of farmers. Linkage with traders, bulk aggregators and online platforms will be used for the purpose.

o Insurance- AE-Hub would link the AEs with insurance institutions for both farm & Non-farm insurance.

o Networking- AE hub would provide a networking platform to AE where they can interact with stakeholders and it will aid them to take business decisions.

Business Plans of AE hub

Business plan of AE hub will be prepared after selection of AEs and trade functions chosen by them. Advisory committee will decide the value share and modalities of business plans. Business plans will only be formed on the basis of services that come under the domains of AEPS-2018.

Institutional arrangement (Structure and governance) of AE Hub

o AEs after being selected at block level have to register as a member of AE-hub. From block level, AEs will nominate a member for AE state level committee who will be associated to bring about transparency and accountability in financial function & developmental function of AE-Hub.

o AE-hub will be registered under relevant acts of registration such as Cooperative Act/Societies Act/Section-8 of Company's Act/Trust to work on the rules and regulations finalised under memorandum of association for fulfilment of its goals and independently conduct its business activities.

o An Advisory Committee will be constituted with the following members who will recommend AE hub for conducting its legal/regulatory/business functions.

1.	MD-APICOL	Chairman
2.	Project Lead- AE Hub	Convener
3.	PMU/ Officer-In-charge, AEPS	Member
4.	Representatives of AE state level Committee	Member
5.	Finance officer-APICOL	Member
6.	Agribusiness- Advisor	Member

The Chairman of the Advisory Committee may, if he thinks expedient to do so, authorize a sub-committee to exercise any of the powers and functions of the Advisory Committee, provided that the decision of the sub-committee shall be placed before the State Level Committee at their next meeting for approval.

7 Roles and responsibilities

__APICOL__

1) APICOL would provide set up space for AE Hub
2) APICOL would set up a Project Management Unit to implement the scheme which will have following functions:
   I.   PMU would implement, review and monitor the project
   II.   PMU would report the progress of the project to APICOL

III. PMU would take care of various procedures with respect to record keeping, accounting, approvals and release of funds in timely manner
IV. PMU would coordinate with AE hub and APICOL for smooth functioning of scheme.
V. PMU would work on the implementation of AEPS-2018. It will coordinate directly with respective project block, Partner agency and BLO, District Nodal Officers to ensure timely implementation of project.
VI. It would coordinate with Block Review and monitoring committee, District Coordination Committee and State Coordination Committee for presenting the out raising issues and facilitate the problem faced by AE & Partner NGO. It will also create an ecosystem for AE to knowledge resource pool, Financial facilitation e.g. Loan Linkages & Subsidy assistance.
VII. PMU would monitor the financial aspect of AEPS-2018. It will release the indented fund and AEPS expenses timely as per convenience for the stake holders.

3) APICOL would fund the scheme after receiving budgetary allocation from the Government.
4) APICOL would also facilitate the AEs to avail finance from banks/NBFCs/PACS/LAMPCS.
5) APICOL would support setting up of Training Centres for conducting centralised trainings related to the AEP scheme at/around Bhubaneswar.
6) MD APICOL will be the final authority to issue relevant circulars and orders for smooth implementation of scheme
7) In case of dispute at any level / necessity of taking any administrative decision Principal Secretary of Dept of Agriculture and FE will be final authority to resolve the dispute.

Partner Agency

1) Partner agency would help in identifying, designing each intervention, preparing business plan and mentoring during implementation of the scheme.
2) Partner agency would help in empanelment of resource persons/ arrange exposure sites and look after the logistics of training by deploying appropriate resources.
3) Partner agency with the help of APICOL would identify certification partners for the training conducted under the scheme.
4) Partner agency would support to build the eco systems for AE to perform with the help of Government departments by providing appropriate linkages.
5) Partner Agency would build the AE-Hub during the project period.
6) Partner Agency would prepare AE hub's plan of business and staffing required based on the volume, transactions and revenue in critical activities.
7) Partner agency would collaborate with Universities/Institutes in the state to create special training centres to train, hand hold and incubate the entrepreneurs.
8) Partner agency would place persons in this project to run AE Hub.

Training Institutions

1) Training Institutions would make an arrangement with APICOL for conducting the centralised trainings during phase 1 and phase 2 of training as mentioned before

2) Training institutions with the help of partner agency and fund support from APICOL would develop various models of demonstrations of agriculture and allied activities to give trainees a ready hand experience during centralised trainings.

3) Training Institutions would quote cost of lodging, boarding for trainees as per the approved cost norms of the respective institutes.

4) Training Institutions would avail their training facility to APICOL and partner agency for conducting trainings.

5) Training Institutes would coordinate with APICOL, partner agency and empanelled Resource persons for conducting of training as per the approved plan of APICOL. Any changes in plan by any of parties should be communicated to one another at least 15 days in advance and will required fresh approval from APICOL.

6) Training Institutions would make a financial arrangement with APICOL and accordingly place indents, bills and Utilisation Certificates to APICOL for meeting the expenses incurred in conducting training.

7) Training institutions would regularly update the progress of the trainings to partner agency and APICOL in prescribed formats.

8 Activity Task Matrix

Following table shows the activities to be taken up in scheme along with its time span during the project period

S.N	Activity	Oct18-Mar20		April 20-March21				April21-Mar22				April22-August 22	
		1-4	5-6	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
1	Finalization of area to start the project												
2	Identification of partner Agency												
3	Guideline preparation												
4	Approval and circulation of the guideline												
5	Setting up of AE-Hub (Placing staff) and incubation Centre												

#	Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
6	Selection of AEs	■	■										
7	Preparation of training module and material		■										
8	Developing Software		■										
9	Training of the AEs. (Infrastructure of the training will be arranged by DA&FE/APICOL)		■	■	■	■							
10	Providing Tab/Mobile to AEs		■	■	■	■							
11	Formal certificate		■	■	■	■							
12	Preparing Business plan and handholding to realize the plan		■	■	■	■							
13	Linkage with Bank and Govt to avail Finance			■	■	■	■						
14	Availing seed and Fertilizer license			■	■	■	■						
15	Payment to AEs on start-up/incubation cost			■	■	■	■			■	■		
16	Submitting plan for infrastructure from different departments			■	■	■	■	■	■				
17	Approval of plan and implementing the schemes as per guideline			■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
18	Facilitating implementation of business plan of AEs				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
19	Identification of ME/FPO in respective geographies				■	■							
20	Identification of potential companies to tie up with AEs ,MEs & FPOs		■										
21	Data base management		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
22	Setting up and conducting of different coordination committees		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

9 Convergence Mechanism

The state level convergence committee under the Department of Agriculture and Farmer's empowerment, Government of Odisha, Department of Fisheries and Animal Resource Development will periodically review the convergence of related schemes to the AEs. MD,

APICOL will convene the meeting of the convergence committee. APICOL will act as nodal agency for executing the convergence activities. An indicative list of activities under the AEPS and potential converging scheme of government is as following. Post completion of business plan of each AE, AE hub will submit the convergence plan under the scheme to the APICOL and APICOL will create mechanisms and ensure the convergence with respective schemes for successful development of AE's enterprises. Following table shows priority list of convergence activities to taken up under the scheme.
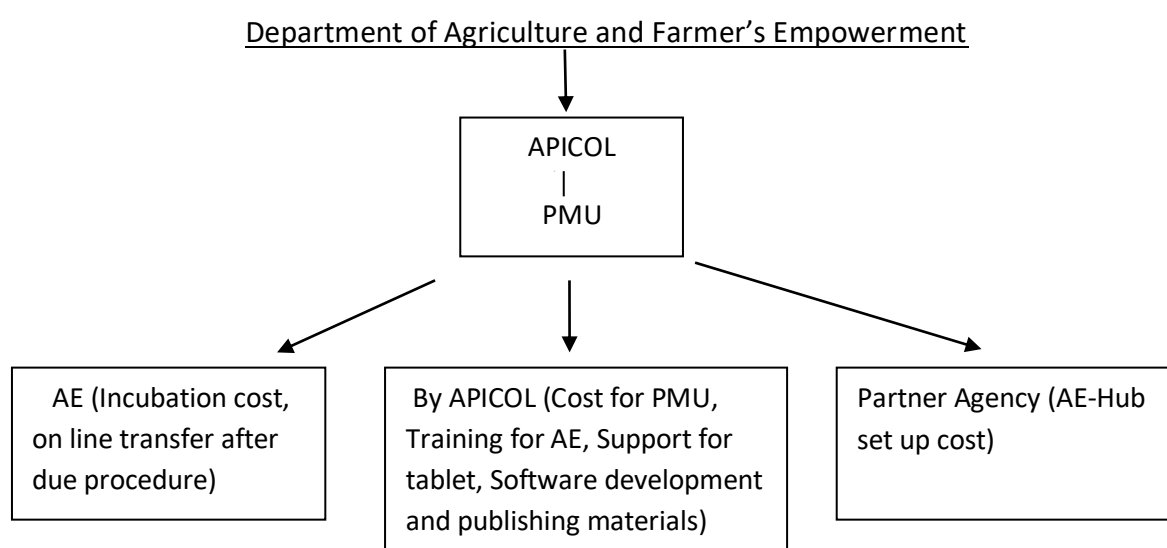
Sr no	Trade	Activity	Schemes /Department
1	Activities under General agro service centre	Nursery raising with shed net and drip (168 sq. meter)	MIDH, MGNREGA
		Agri-Mechanisation Services a. Agro Service centre b. Linking with Common Facility Centre of OLM c. Individual farm implements	a. APICOL b. OLM c. Agriculture & FE dept.
		Vermi-compost /composting	MGNREGA and MIDH, MKUY
		Solar power cold storage unit	OREDA/APICOL
2	Seed production	HYV, Open pollinated and hybrid Seed production	Schemes of Odisha State Seed Corporation- Seed village scheme, Seed production programs run by CRRI, OUAT, ANGRAU etc.
3	Mushroom Spawn production and services		Extension program of KVKs (OUAT)/CIFA /DH(O)/APICOL
4	Goat and poultry breeder and vet services	Goat and vet services Poultry and vet services	Special programme for goat and poultry development under department of ARD, MKUY-APICOL
5	Fisheries	Fingerling production	Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture under FFDA, NFDB, NMPS, MGNREGA, MKUY- APICOL ,MPY for Fish Ponds etc.

Additionally, for training and exposure as far as possible APICOL will converge with government institutions like NIRD & PR, RSETI, OSDA, NSDC, ASCI and CSR funds who can contribute to training costs and curriculum for conducting such trainings.
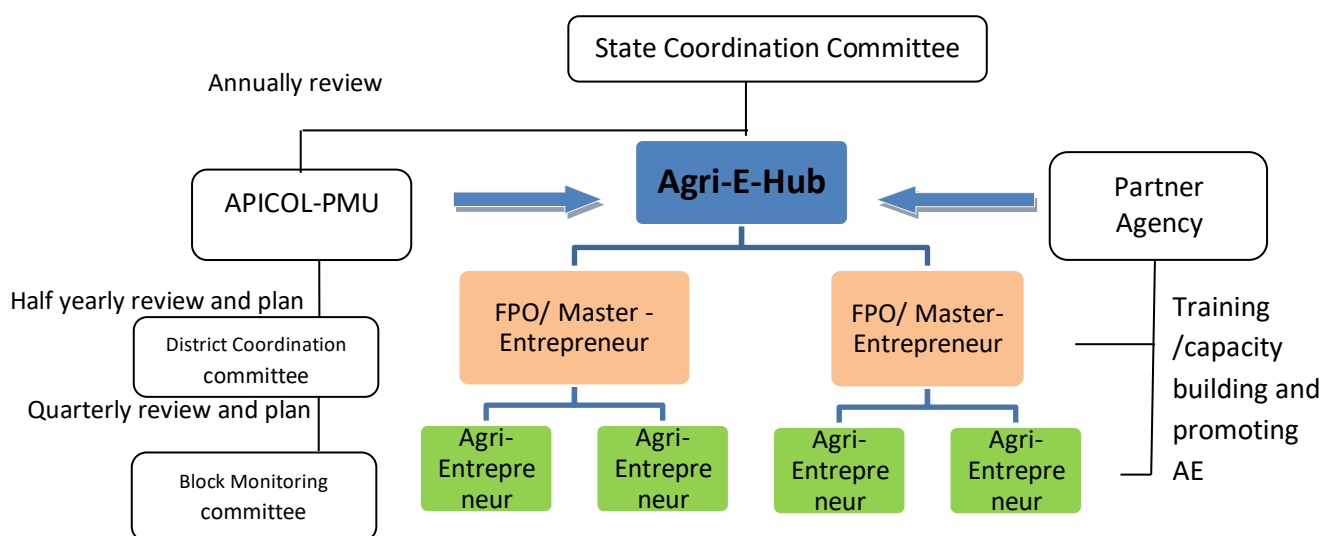
10 Fund flow Mechanism

APICOL would implement this program and will pay to the partner agency AE hub costs in phases against the plan. Other expenditures will be directly made by APICOL through its PMU. Partner agency will submit the training details along with an assessment after completion of the training and different phases as mentioned before.

Following diagram depicts the flow chart of fund flow for various heads under the scheme (to be decided by APICOL)

Department of Agriculture and Farmer's Empowerment

APICOL
PMU

| AE (Incubation cost, on line transfer after due procedure) | By APICOL (Cost for PMU, Training for AE, Support for tablet, Software development and publishing materials) | Partner Agency (AE-Hub set up cost) |

11 Institutional arrangement and monitoring mechanism

State Coordination Committee

Annually review

APICOL-PMU → Agri-E-Hub ← Partner Agency

Half yearly review and plan

District Coordination committee

FPO/ Master - Entrepreneur

FPO/ Master- Entrepreneur

Training /capacity building and promoting AE

Quarterly review and plan

Block Monitoring committee

Agri-Entrepreneur   Agri-Entrepreneur   Agri-Entrepreneur   Agri-Entrepreneur

Agri Entrepreneurs, FPOs, Master Entrepreneurs play following key role in realising the goals set in the scheme at block level.

Agri-Entrepreneur (AE):

1) AE would enrol to the AE-Hub by paying enrolment fees
2) AE would have their designated bank account/ digital payment wallet linked to the AE-Hub for easy payment for purchases. Their transaction record can be used by banks for sanctioning larger loans/ overdraft as and when required by them.
3) AE would do the business activity in their selected trade in the areas allocated to them
4) AE would also have a network at their APC (Agriculture production Cluster) level to aggregate their demand and improve the quality of services. They will work closely with the FPOs for building mutuality; however they will play their role independently.

FPOs/Master Entrepreneurs (ME) :

1) Since the AEs are placed at Gram Panchayat level and may not find it convenient to purchase directly from the AE-Hub, the *local FPOs/ SHG tier institution / Co-operatives/ Producers company   are functioning they can act as MEs (also preferred) based on a defined process of selection* facilitate their orders as well as act as a support centre for their technical problems, warranty claims, product related issues etc.
2) Alternatively, in block where such CBO are not there, Master Entrepreneurs may be promoted among AEs having a higher competencies and/or relevant experience placed to play such roles.
3) Some of such higher competencies AEs may get direct training from the product/ service suppliers to deal with the technicalities of products to become thematic leaders to graduate into a Master AE. They also can access larger loans from banks for a ware-house, repair/ maintenance workshop etc. partner agency would map the potential MEs and link them with relevant companies.
4) These FPOs/entrepreneurs build linkages with the AEs and also get connected with the AE-Hub.
5) Existing Agri Entrepreneurs in the area will be preferred to play this role such that the total number of AEs and Master AEs promoted together under the scheme will be 1000.

As mentioned before, the proposed PMU of APICOL will regularly monitor the project.

To track the progress and guide this scheme at different levels there will be coordination committees who will be facilitating the roles AEs, FPOs and MEs as mentioned below.

Level	Coordination Body	Composition of the Committee	Roles
State	State Coordination Committee	• Headed by the Agriculture Production Commissioner, Odisha Other members include: •Principal Secretary, Dept. of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, • Principal Secretary, ST and SC, M and BC Development Department • Principal Secretary, WCD and MS • Commissioner-cum-Secretary, FARD Department Commissioner-cum- Director, Mission Shakti, Director of Horticulture , Director of Agriculture & FP, Director, IMAGE, Mission Director, OLM, Director, AH & VS , Director of Fisheries, MD, OSC Bank and CGM, NABARD, Convener - SLBC • MD, APICOL- Member Convener	•Annual Plan Approval and Budget Allocation •Overall coordination •Convergence of schemes from other Dept. •Review and Monitoring of the project annually once •Issue circulars / Office orders to create enabling conditions
District	District Coordination Committee	• Headed by Collector-cum-District Magistrate of the concerned district Other members include: • Project Director, DRDA of the concerned district • Chief District Agriculture Officer- Member Convener Deputy Director Horticulture ,DPM-OLM, DPM- Mission Shakti, Concerned Block Agriculture Officer, Lead District Manager, Secretary, District Central Cooperative Bank, Chief District Veterinary Officer , District Fisheries Officer, DWO, DDM, NABARD, LDM	• Coordination with various departments and Convergence of relevant schemes •Half yearly review and planning meeting
Block	Review and Monitoring	• Headed by Block Development	• Quarterly review and plan of

	Committee	Officer Other members include: • Block level ATMA convener- Member Convener Block level Agriculture / Horticulture/ Fisheries/Veterinary/Soil Conservation & WM Officer, BTM-ATMA, BPM-OLM/Mission Shakti, WEO, ,representative from CBO/FPO/PG ,Training institute/ Partner organizations	implementation • BLO may convene special meetings as per the requirement • Coordination among stakeholders

- In addition to above, APICOL will conduct internal review and monitoring of scheme every month and submit quarterly progress reports to Department of Agriculture and farmer's Empowerment.
- At the end of every year, APICOL would conduct third party assessment/monitoring of the scheme.

12 MIS

All AEs will have a tab/ mobile based platform to enter the information and there will be a dashboard to show the required information in APICOL website. Appropriate software will be developed so that information can be regularly tracked by the AE-Hub. Most of the information will be entered by AEs as that will also help her in the business, some information will be entered by BLO and training institutes. Money will be released based on the information, reports at each level. For transparency and efficiency reports will be uploaded in the web portal.

MIS will record following data

1. AE applications details
2. AE unique number and convergence data
3. AE selection data
4. AE training updates
5. Monthly AE Business data
6. Farmers coverage data
7. AEPS progress data
8. Impact analysis data
9. Review data
10. Coordination Committee meeting proceedings
11. AE hub Business data

Formats for above information will be developed in association of Software service provider.

13 Communication strategies

During the course of implementation of program, the achievement and issues aroused is to be audited and reviewed by the internal coordination committees at different level of operations. However a third party will be hired by APICOL to conduct research & studies to encase the system and broad area approach of the program. The research out comes and results will be published in different journals and blogs.

14 Transparency and RTI

APICOL and AE Hub are liable for RTI.

The physical and financial statements will be available in the program website.

APICOL will maintain a web based MIS with login facility with a process of updating data on regular basis and periodically monitor the scheme. A database will also be maintained containing financial transaction, farmer's details, and location details. Monthly updates will be circulated among the stakeholders.

Modification of eligibility criteria of the Agriculture Entrepreneur

As per letter no- 1017 dated 13.01.2021 of D & FE, Govt. of Odisha following points will be adhered to for selection of AEs.

1) Aadhar enabled identification of the AEs will be mandatory. If Aadhar is not available for an AE steps to be taken for enrolling them in Aadhar.
2) Possession of 1 Acre land should be relaxed to accomodate more tribal AEs where needed.