

**GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL**  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
**NABANNA, 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR**  
**325, SARAT CHATTERJEE ROAD,**  
**MANDIRTALA, SHIBPUR, HOWRAH-711 102.**

No.1667-AG-11042(11)/22/2021-NAB      Dated, Howrah, the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2021

**NOTIFICATION**

The 'Agriculture Infrastructure Fund(AIF)' extends Agriculture Infrastructure Finance to PACS, FPOs, SHGs, JLGs, Agriculture entrepreneurs, start-ups etc. and financially viable Post Harvest Management infrastructure projects. The scheme provides a medium-to-long term debt financing facility for investment in aforementioned types of projects.

In terms of Memo No. 724-FB dated 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 issued by the Finance Department Government of West Bengal deciding to implement AIF in the State, this is hereby notified that Department of Agriculture, Govt. of West Bengal will be the Nodal Department for implementation of the AIF Scheme in West Bengal.

A High Power Committee(HPC) headed by the Chief Secretary will overarch the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund as decided and communicated by Finance Department.

The following are the **Salient features of the Scheme:**

**1. Objective of the Scheme :**

- i. To mobilize a medium to long term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through incentives and financial support in order to improve agriculture infrastructure for Farmers including FPOs, PACS, Marketing Cooperative Societies, Multipurpose cooperative societies etc.
- ii. Improve marketing infrastructure to allow farmers to sell directly to a larger base of consumers and hence, increase value realization for the farmers.
- iii. Reduce post-harvest losses.
- iv. Facilitate modern packaging and cold storage system access to farmers.
- v. Community farming assets for improved productivity and optimization of inputs.
- vi. Initiate the cycle of innovation and private sector investment in agriculture.
- vii. To structure viable PPP projects for attracting investment in agriculture infrastructure.
- viii. Lower the risk to Lending Institutions for loans for setting up agriculture infrastructure.

*JL*  
10/12/21

## 2. **Components:**

The following are the components of the scheme:

- i. Interest Subvention Cost: The PACs/ FPOs/ SHGs/ JLGs/ Agri. Entrepreneurs etc. taking loan under the scheme will get an interest subvention @3% p.a. up-to a limit of Rs.2 crores for maximum period of 7 years.
- ii. Credit Guarantee Cost: Credit guarantee coverage for loans up-to Rs.2 crores will be available to eligible borrowers under Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE).
- iii. Administrative Cost of Project Monitoring Unit (PMU).

## 3. **Linkage with PFMS :**

Interest subvention and credit guarantee support will be released to Banks and lending institutions through PFMS as per guidelines of the AIF scheme. Disbursal of funds by lending entities to beneficiaries under this scheme shall be in Aadhaar linked bank account.

## 4. **Eligible Projects:**

The scheme will facilitate setting up and modernization of key elements of the value chain including:

A. Post Harvest Management Projects like: Supply chain services including e-marketing platforms, Warehouses, Silos, Pack houses, Assaying units, Sorting&grading units, Cold chains, Logistics facilities, Primary processing centers, Ripening Chambers etc.

### B. **Viable projects for building community farming assets including:**

- i. Organic inputs production.
- ii. Bio stimulant production units.
- iii. Infrastructure for smart and precision agriculture.
- iv. Projects identified for providing supply chain infrastructure for clusters of crops including export clusters.
- v. Projects promoted by Central/State/Local Governments or their agencies under PPP for building community farming assets or post harvest management projects.

## 5. **Criteria for selection of Eligible Borrower:**

Lending institutions will decide criteria for selection of eligible borrower in consultation with NABARD and monitoring committees, PMUs and keeping in mind the viability of the projects and to avoid NPA.

## 6. **Sector specific focus:**

24% of total grants-in-aid under the scheme should be utilized for SC/ST entrepreneurs (16% for SC and 8% for ST). Besides this, lending institutions will ensure adequate coverage of entrepreneurs belonging to women and other weaker segments of society.



**7. Project Management and handholding support:**

An online platform will be made available in collaboration with participating lending institutions to provide information and loan sanctioning facility. AIF will be managed and monitored through the said online MIS platform. It will enable all the qualified entities to apply for loan under the fund.

**8. Convergence:**

Any grant or subsidy available under any present or future scheme of Central/State government can be availed for projects under this financing facility. In cases of capital subsidy such amount shall be considered as promoter's contribution. However, a minimum of 10% of the project cost shall be mandatory as promoter's contribution.

**9. Monitoring Framework:**

To ensure real-time and effective monitoring of implementation of the scheme, there are provisions in the Scheme guidelines for formation of State Level Monitoring Committee and District Level Monitoring Committees.

10. The composition and functions of the State Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC) and District Level Monitoring Committee (DLMC) will be as follows:

**A. State Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC):**

**i. Composition:**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>
Addl. Chief Secretary / Pr. Secretary / Secretary, Agriculture Department	Chairman
Director of Agriculture &EoS, West Bengal	Member
Director of Horticulture, FPI&H Department	Member
Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences Department	Member
Director, Fisheries Department	Member
Registrar, Cooperative Societies	Member
Commissioner, Panchayat and Rural Development	Member
Representative from SFAC	Member
Representative from NCDC	Member
Representative from NABARD, West Bengal Region	Member Secretary
Convener, SLBC West Bengal	Member
One expert from BCKV to be nominated by VC, BCKV	Member
One expert from UBKV to be nominated by VC, UBKV	Member
Spl.Secretary/ Addl. Secretary/ Jt. Secretary, Agriculture Department	Member
State Nodal Officer for AIF (as decided by Department of Agriculture not below the rank of Jt. Director of Agriculture)	Member

The SLMC may co-opt additional members as per need.

**ii. Role of State Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC):**

- a. State level Monitoring Committee (SLMC) will guide and steer the implementation of the scheme in the state.

