

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
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NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

2014-15

**Theme: Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and
Drought**

Guidelines for Participating Agencies under NEAC

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

2014-2015

Guidelines & Proforma for submitting proposals

THEME:

“ Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought ”

The National Environment Awareness Campaign launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India in 1986, aims to create awareness on environmental issues among a wide group of stakeholders. Several non-governmental organizations, educational and training institutions, professional associations, scientific bodies, community organizations, and also a whole range of other agencies participate in the campaign. These bodies singularly or in partnership with other organizations, organize programmes for creating environmental awareness followed by field action at the local, regional and national level.

Theme

Theme for 2014-15 is **“Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought”**. Keeping in view of Rio+20 Conference in 2012, wherein world leaders recognized DLDD as a serious global challenge impeding sustainable development globally and agreed towards an aspirational goal for achieving a land-degradation neutral world. India is a signatory to the UN convention, the country has been meeting its obligations through implementation of various programmes and reporting the progress to UNCCD secretariat periodically. The awareness and actions taken up under NEAC will contribute towards building the aspirational goal of making India Land degradation neutral by 2030.

Land is a vital resource for producing food, preserving biodiversity, facilitating the natural management of water systems and acting as a carbon store. Degradation of soils and land due to soil erosion and other degradation processes is a severe problem in many regions in India. In India dry lands constitute an area of 228.3 million hectares (about 69.6 %). As per the assessment carried out by Space Application Centre (2007) the total area undergoing the process of land degradation in India is estimated at 105.48 million hectares which constituted 32.07 percentage of India's total land area and the area undergoing desertification is 81.45 million hectare which constituted 24.78% of country's geographical area. Land degradation reduces the productivity of land particularly in drylands can leave the soil exposed and vulnerable to climatic hazards such as drought. Degradation of land resources is manifested in desertification. Theme of this programme is chosen in context to sensitise masses about this problem and measures to combat it.

Sub Themes

Further this theme “Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought” is divided into two subthemes i.e **Adopting sustainable land management practices** and **Restoration of degraded land** which in a way will initiate a focussed action plan in stakeholders to combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought.

- **Adopting sustainable land management practices**

Sustainable land management (SLM) is a comprehensive approach, with the potential of making very significant and lasting differences in the near future, and over the long-term. In order to increase production from the land efficient use of water can be achieved by reducing high water loss through run off, harvesting water, improving infiltration and maintaining water storage. Soil fertility loss can be addressed through crop rotation, intercropping, application of animal and green manure and compost through integrated crop-livestock system, appropriate supplementation of inorganic fertiliser. Strategic choice of plant varieties which are resistant to drought, pests, salinity and other constraints is further opportunity.

- **Restoration of degraded land**

Land restoration and revegetation is carried out through execution of corrective measures on land where the degradation has occurred. Recognising cause and effect and targeting the cause is first step towards restoration of degraded land. Planting native plants, green belt formation, traditional methods of stopping soil erosion etc may be promoted to work for restoration of degraded lands.

Action Component

In tune with Theme and Subthemes a suggestive list of action components will further facilitate the stakeholders to put their efforts in combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought. A suggestive list of action components includes:

Documentation of local traditional knowledge/practices related to farming, water conservation, weather forecasting etc., Establishment of green belt of traditional plants, Practising water harvesting techniques, development of soak pits, conservation of local water bodies etc., Preparation and promotion of bio-pesticides, biofertilizers, vermi-compost etc., Establishments of trenches, bunds, soak pits etc., Inculcating the water budgeting habits through community discussion, workshops etc.

While the National theme and sub-themes for NEAC 2014-2015 are mentioned , all the RRAs may also choose local/region action component under National Theme/Subtheme.

What are these Programmes?

Annexure-I gives an indicative list of the kind of awareness and action components that may be organized for different target groups during the Campaign. In view of the wide range of inter-related environmental problems facing the country, the activities of the Campaign shall focus on scientific environmental issues and problems relating to main/regional/local themes.

Emphasis should be given for devising concrete, action-oriented activities on the issue/problem identified.

Support Structure for the Campaign

The Campaign is being planned and overseen by the Ministry of Environment Forests and Climate Change. The decentralized mechanism adopted for conducting this Campaign since 1993 is being continued this year too. Thirty-three organizations located in different parts of the country have been designated as Regional Resource Agencies (RRAs) this year for assisting the Ministry in conducting this Campaign.

Role of Regional Resource Agencies (RRAs)

RRAs will assist the Ministry in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Campaign in their respective areas. The RRAs will inter alia:

- (i) Print proforma for submission of applications as per the model furnished by the Ministry.
- (ii) Dispatch the proforma free of cost to all the interested organizations in their region.
- (iii) Organize district-wise open workshop(s) for NGOs/interested organizations in their regions to provide them the guidelines and assistance for formulating their programmes, especially the action oriented component and for filling up the proforma.
- (iv) Scrutinize all the proposals received from various organizations in their region and prepare a brief summary of proposals for consideration by the committee.
- (v) Assist the Committee in scrutinizing the proposals received from their region. The RRAs would have to provide information about the competence and past experience of each organization.
- (vi) Receive Bond or an affidavit from the approved participating organisations for the 60% of the grant recommended to individual organisations and encash the same in the event of participating organisations failing to submit required reports, utilisation Certificates and audited statements of accounts for the entire amount sanctioned within the stipulated time.
- (vii) Disburse funds sanctioned by the Ministry to various organizations in their region for conducting NEAC activities.
- (viii) Physically monitor the NEAC activities conducted by various organizations in their region. A separate Monitoring Report in respect of all Physically monitored programmes to be submitted to the Ministry.
- (ix) Maintain audited statement of accounts of the money disbursed to each organization.
- (x) Procure Utilization Certificate, Report of Activities and Statement of Accounts from each participating organizations for submitting a consolidated UC & audited statement of account in respect of their area of jurisdiction.

- (xi) Prepare an Evaluation Report of the NEAC activities conducted by each organization in their region.

The Invitation

This write up and the attached copies of the project proposal proforma are being sent to organizations and groups active in the field of environment education and awareness and interested in participating in the Campaign. Individuals and unregistered Societies/ Trusts are not eligible for receiving financial assistance for this campaign.

*****Kindly note that the completed proposal in the prescribed format is to be sent only to RRA and not to the Ministry directly. Proposals submitted to the Ministry will not be considered.***

A set of Regional Committees constituted by the Ministry of Environment Forests and Climate Change will appraise the proposals and decide the budgetary support for them. It is clarified that the decision to approve/ reject any proposal including the quantum of assistance to be provided is taken only by the Committee constituted by the Ministry. RRA has no role in this. The decision of the committee will be communicated to the Campaign participants by RRA. The approved amount would be released to the participating agencies in two instalments as follows:

- (a) First instalment comprising 60% of the sanctioned amount would be released **against Bond or an affidavit.**
- (b) The second installment as the balance amount of the expenditure reported/amount sanctioned shall be released on receipt of activity report, utilization certificate and audited statement of accounts before the stipulated time.
- (c) Second installment of grant will not be released to the organisations failing to submit the required reports, utilisation certificates and audited statement of accounts within the stipulated time and in such cases the Bond or an affidavit furnished by such defaulting organisations will be encashed by the respective RRAs. In addition, such defaulting organisations will be blacklisted from receiving grants from the Government of India in future.

Timelines for Participating Organizations:

NEAC 2014-2015 would essentially be composed of a spectrum of short duration programmes for creating environmental awareness among the citizens of India.

1. The Campaign activities would be spread between **30.11.2014 to 28.02.2015.**
2. All programmes should definitely be concluded by **28.02.2015.**
3. Projects that would most effectively reflect the theme of this year and woven around local environmental issues and problems and which succeed in emphasizing the importance of local citizen action in combating the same may receive priority while consideration by the Committee.
4. The use of non-conventional media and methods of creating environmental awareness would be welcomed.

5. The programme **MUST** have some action component that will ensure result in concrete action. However, projects aimed only at physical work to rejuvenate the environment will not be considered under this Campaign. Such programmes could well be a part of follow up efforts to be separately taken up.
6. Purchase of equipment or other fixed assets would not be granted financial support from the Ministry of Environment & Forests under this Campaign.
7. Projects that involve collaborative effort between more than one organization and which secure co-operation from local authorities, agencies etc. in advance would be viewed favourably.
8. RRA must be informed about the details of the programme including dates, venue etc. sufficiently in advance (at least 2 weeks). Failure to inform will result in non-payment of second instalment.
9. A full report on each programme with photographs and news clipping (if any), together with Utilization Certificate and audited statement of accounts would have to be submitted by each participating agency receiving financial support from RRA **latest by 20.03.2015** to the respective RRA.
10. Financial assistance is provided under NEAC to various organizations to supplement their efforts and hence, the quantum of financial assistance usually ranges between Rs.10,000/- and Rs.30,000/-.

**The last date for submission of completed Application form to the RRA is
20.08.2014**

ANNEXURE- I

1. TARGET GROUPS

- Students/ Youth/ Teachers/ Women
- NGOs/ Voluntary Workers
- Farmers/ Rural Population
- General Public/ Social Workers
- Armed Force Personal
- Industrial Workers

2. ACTIVITIES (These are indicative and others activists may be included)

2.1 AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

1. Workshops/Training Courses/Camps/Yatras/ Rallies
2. Public Meetings/ Exhibitions/ Competitions
3. Demonstration Projects
4. Preparation of Audio Visual Materials
5. Folk Media/ Street Theatres/ Festivals/ Science Fairs
6. Preparation / Use of CD- ROM & Other multimedia tools

While the above activities could be used for creation of awareness, the proposals must also include an action-oriented component related to the issue identified, which would result in concrete action preferably involving local people, and in benefiting the community. **Proposals without action component would not be considered for assistance.**

2.2 ACTION COMPONENTS: (these are broad areas and are indicative, other activities related to Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought at the local level is encouraged)

1. Documentation of local traditional knowledge/practices related to farming, water conservation, weather forecasting etc.
2. Establishment of green belt of traditional plants.
3. Practising water harvesting techniques, development of soak pits, conservation of local water bodies etc.
4. Preparation and promotion of bio-pesticides, biofertilizers, vermi-compost etc. .
5. Establishments of trenches, bunds, soak pits etc.
6. Inculcating the water budgeting habits through community discussion, workshops etc.
7. Others