

Planning for a Destitute Free Kerala

Destitute Free Kerala is a prestigious program of the Government of Kerala which envisages the rehabilitation of all destitute in Kerala, thereby enabling them to live in a dignified way. The program which was kick started on 19 October 2017, is in fact the restructured Asraya Project started in 2003 to ensure the inclusion of the destitute in the mainstream development programs. The Destitute Free Kerala Program (hereby called DFK) is designed in such a way as to include any family which falls into the clutches of destituteness at any time.

The beneficiaries of DFK program are selected on the basis of the 9 – point criteria and the additional criteria. If a family satisfies 7 out of the 9 criteria and 1 out of additional criteria, they are included in the beneficiary list of DFK. In DFK, a provision is made such that, a family who satisfies infrastructure criteria of the 9 – point criteria but has no member who has job for more than 10 days a month, is included in a Special List. Those in the Special List will not be included in the DFK Program but will be given a helping hand in engaging in income generation activities by the Kudumbashree and Local Self Government Institutes (LSGIs).

DFK program uses a mobile platform to identify the beneficiary families. Kudumbashree CDS, with the help of Neighborhood Groups (NHGs), will form an initial list of beneficiary families which will be surveyed by trained resource persons using the mobile app. The mobile app uses GPS to pinpoint the beneficiaries' location precisely. Later the data is sorted and beneficiaries for the programme are selected automatically using the software designed for the same.

Since manual selection has been done away with, it is expected that selection of beneficiaries will be more reliable.

This list is published in LSGIs and appeals on the list are verified by the Panchayat. Finally the list is approved and ratified by Gramasabhas and the Panchayat Committees/ Municipal/ Corporation Councils. Once the list is ratified, the LSGIs have to organize medical camps to ascertain the health issues of the beneficiaries.

Once health camps are conducted, CDS accountants prepare Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) using new web portal designed for the same. One DPR is prepared for one LSGI. DPRs once prepared should be submitted to the District Mission through online platform. Dafter verifying the same, District Missions will do the online submission to the State Mission. Separate web pages are being created for the LSGIs, District Missions and the State Mission. The entire process is expected to be done accurately with no time elapse since it is done through the online platform. User friendly web interface will ease the data entry for CDS workers. Using digital signature, the officials at the District and State Missions can verify the projects virtually. On the whole, the web based DPR preparation, submission and verification is expected to bring down the time taken usually.

For DFK Project, Kudumbashree gives a fund called Challenge Fund used for covering the basic needs of the beneficiaries like food, medicine and education. Challenge Fund is 40% of the total fund for DFK or Rs. 40 lakhs whichever is lesser. In case of ST Projects, Challenge Fund is 40% of the total fund for DFK or Rs. 50 lakhs whichever is lesser. The rest of the fund will be spent by the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Infrastructure facilities and other needs will be provided by the LSGIs.

Monitoring of the entire project will be done through web platform. Apart from this, various Committees should be formed at LSGI, District and State level to ensure that the benefits reach the destitute on a timely basis without any loss in quality. A Toll Free Number will also be made available so that anytime inclusion of a destitute family is possible in the Project.

The Project intends to bring the destitute into the manifolds of development. Thus the project ensures that they are also brought into the mainstream of the society.