No.F.23012/17/14-RD(NREGS)
GOVERNMENT OF MIZORAM
RURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Dated Aizawl, the 4th April 2014

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Guidelines for Development of Rubber Plantations through Convergence of MGNREGS and Soil & Water Conservation Department in Mizoram

In pursuance to the Guidelines for Convergence of MGNREGA and Rubber Plantation issued by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, vide D.O No. J-l1017/17/2013-MGNREGA (UN) (Pt. – III) dated 2nd August 2013, Rural Development Department, Government of Mizoram and Soil and Water Conservation Department, Government of Mizoram jointly issued Guidelines for Convergence of MGNREGA with Rubber Plantation for sustainable livelihood of the rubber plantation farmers in the State.

1. Context

1.1 Rubber Cultivation as source of livelihood and a measure for drought proofing: In many parts of the country, Rubber cultivation is a means of sustainable livelihood that not only provides employment but also leads to recurring income generation over long term. There is also a potential interest in the rubber plantation in Mizoram, hence convergence between MGNREGA and rubber plantation at selected clusters or blocks or districts for enhancement of rural livelihood in the long term.

Rubber plantations hold around 500 trees in one hectare land and thus provide a thick green closed canopy on even on barren/fallow lands which would otherwise be without any vegetation cover, especially in Non-Traditional rubber growing tracts including the North-East. In other words, the afforestation effect due to rubber tree plantation enables effective drought proofing as the soil in a rubber planted area is not exposed to sunlight and rain drop impact, resulting check in evaporation & soil erosion and enhanced infiltration & water conservation. Being a deciduous tree, the mulching effect on land due to the leaf-litter fall of about 7 tons per ha per year is an added advantage.

Rubber tree grows on many types of soil, provided they are deep and well drained. A warm, humid equable climate and fairly distributed annual rainfall are necessary for the optimum growth. However, studies undertaken in selected pockets of non-traditional areas have revealed the feasibility of rubber cultivation in other areas also, if scientific practices are adopted.

1.2 Schemes of Rubber Board: Rubber Board, as a part of the two schemes that it implements viz Rubber Plantation Development Scheme (RPD) and Rubber Development in North East (RDNE) provides handholding support to

cultivators during the initial years of rubber plantation development and builds capacities in rubber cultivators to reap the harvest of the fruits of their hard labour, when the plantation is ready for harvest. Further, the scheme facilitates value addition and also provides a strong marketing network so that the remote rural areas are assured of appropriate market linkages. The Nodal Department for Rubber in Mizoram is Soil & Water Conservation Department.

1.3 NABARD: There some rubber plantation in and around Kolasib District which can be converged with MGNREGA in consultation with the Nodal Department in Mizoram, which is Soil & Water Conservation Department

1.4 MGNREGA: One of the primary objectives of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act (MGNREGA) is to provide employment to rural households on demand and in the process generate durable assets that lead to sustainable livelihood for the poor family.

2. Common objectives of MGNREGS and Schemes of Rubber Board:

The schemes operated by Rubber Board, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India, viz ., Rubber Plantation Development (RPD) and Rubber Development in North-East (RDNE) have similar objectives as MGNREGA. These are:

i) Providing livelihood through creation of durable assets and employment generation for the vulnerable people in rural areas so as to enable their socio-economic security and enhance livelihood security.

ii) Improving land productivity, soil protection and improved water conservation.

iii) Empowerment of the socially disadvantaged section of the society, especially women, Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

iv) Conversion of barren and cultivable waste lands to productive use

3. Scope for Convergence:

3.1 Almost all the works involved in the initial years of rubber plantation are labour intensive. It is estimated that around 1500 man days are required for raising one hectare of rubber plantation in the initial 6-7 years (during the immature phase). This sector is thus capable of providing huge employment opportunities for rural poor / job card holders of MGNREGS and at the same time in creation of durable assets that can strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor. There is, thus, immense scope for convergence of activities under MGNREGA and Rubber Plantation Development schemes of the Rubber Board.

3.2 The broad categories of activities involved in Rubber Plantation are (a) Plantation development (b) Productivity enhancement, including nursery development (c) Farmer group formation and empowerment, (d) infrastructure

support for harvesting, post-harvest processing and marketing.

3.3 Of these, some activities that are described in following Para and which are labour intensive can be covered in MGNREGA. Remaining activities including technical support can come from the schemes of Rubber Board.

4. Constitution of Coordination Committee:

There shall be State Level Coordination Committee with Secretary, Rural Development Department as Chairman; Director, Soil & Water Conservation Department, Joint Secretary, Rural Development Department, Joint Director, Soil & Water Conservation Department as members.

In the District level, District Programme Coordinator will be the Chairman of District Level Coordination Committee and the District Programme Officer, District Soil & Water Conservation Officer and Programme Officers will be members.

At the Block Level, Programme Officer along with line departments if any and Presidents of the Village Councils concerned where the scheme is being implemented and the concerned Village Level Administrative Assistant will form the Block Level Coordination Committee

Soil & Water Conservation Department shall appoint a Nodal Officer for Convergence at the State level

5. Activities to be covered under MGNREGA (gestation period 6-7 years)

Plantation development activities: (only unskilled & semiskilled labour part will be covered under MGNREGA as detailed in illustrative exercise at **Annexure I & II)**

Sl.No	Items under MGNREGA	Details
1	Clearing/Land development	The identified land has to be developed adequately by removing remnants (roots etc.) of pre-existing vegetation and clearing for raising rubber plantation with ideal spacing. These works are essential while converting uncultivable and barren/fallow lands into cultivable lands through one time land development.
2	Pitting and Refilling	Pits of 0.75m^3 size are to be taken, refilled with top soil and then planted in the centre with HYV planting material.
3	Terracing	Planting is undertaken on contours in sloppy land where contour terraces are taken; otherwise individual bench/table terracing is done so as to facilitate soil and water conservation.

4	Weeding and mulching	Rubber is a crop where zero tillage is practiced after plants are established. Hence, the soil is left undisturbed facilitating growth of vegetation underneath the plantation. This vegetation cover is seasonally chopped and used as mulch over the tree base. In first 2 years this activity will be covered under MGNREGA and thereafter beneficiary will carry out this activity
5	Pruning and branch induction	This activity involves removal of undesired side-shoots and artificial branch induction where the branch initiation is found delayed
6	Boundary protection	Protection of plants from attack of stray cattle/ wildlife, especially during the initial years has to be done to ensure successful establishment of the plants. Live fencing/ fencing with locally available materials such as bamboo is generally promoted

6. Activities proposed through Rubber Board Schemes and NABARD & Beneficiaries own contribution:

Harvesting and post-harvest processing support till marketing of the produce will be supported through the Rubber Board schemes.

Sl.No	Items under S&WC Deptt	Details
1	Planting	Planting in the centre with HYV planting material.
2	Fertilizer application	One round of fertilizer is to be applied during the first year and additionally, 2-3 rounds during subsequent years
3	Leguminous cover crop planting & establishing	Planting cover crop is a one-time activity during the initial year. Within 2-3 years it spreads all over the area and acts as a green mat over the ground, reduces the slashing effect of heavy rain, conserves moisture, enhances soil aeration, adds humus to soil and above all fixes atmospheric nitrogen thus minimizing the need for chemical fertilizers
4	Plant protection/disease management	Prophylactic (preventive) and curative measures against sun-scorching, incidence of diseases etc. are undertaken
5	Boundary protection	Protection of plants from attack of stray cattle/ wildlife, especially during the initial years has to be done to ensure successful establishment of the plants. Live fencing/ fencing with locally available materials such as bamboo is generally promoted

A detailed break up of activities that can be provided through (1) MGNREGA (2) Schemes of Rubber Board and (3) Beneficiaries own contribution is provided in a illustrative exercise at **Annexure I & II** respectively. The annexure also gives details of the quantities involved, estimated costs (labour and material separately), source of funds etc.

7. Design, Specifications and cost norms

7.1 The designs/ specifications will adhere to the norms of Rubber Board. Although the unit size of individual holding can range from 0.10ha – 1.00ha, spacing for planting is generally 15ft X 15 ft. on plains, 20 ft. X10 ft or 22 ft x 11 ft. etc according to the gradient of the slope. State Governments should ensure that only approved clones and quality planting materials is used.

7.2 Modifications from the guidelines of RB schemes depending on geo-climatic conditions and planting material will be permitted only with the concurrence of Rubber Board.

7.3 Cost norms: For MGNREGA part, costs will be estimated on the basis of State / region specific SoRs. For the remaining parts, the norms as prescribed by Rubber Board will be applicable.

8. Mode of implementation

8.1 Planning:

8.1.1 Rubber plantation through this convergence model will be taken up in pockets where the soil / climatic conditions are congenial/ suitable for growing rubber as identified by Rubber Board. Rubber Board will also identify suitable land and the list of beneficiaries, who are eligible for work on their individual/ private land under MGNREGA, after assessing the technical feasibility. Based on the above and the area that can be brought under rubber cultivation in a given year, projects with list of beneficiaries from a village/ward or Gram Panchayat, desirous of taking up Rubber Cultivation will be prepared & put up in the Gram Sabha for approval and inclusion in shelf of projects and Annual Plan of the GP. From the approved list, cultivators from a ward/ village/ GP will be grouped together in a Cluster. A Self Help Group (SHG) / Rubber Production Society (RPS) of all potential cultivators in a cluster will be facilitated by the Rubber Board. Roles and responsibilities and some more details on RPSs are given in Annexure-1

8.1.2 Administrative sanction/Financial sanction (AS/FS) for works of rubber plantation development under MGNREGA approved by Gram Sabha will be issued cluster-wise by the DPC, MGNREGA following the process defined in MGNREGA and Operational Guidelines .For the remaining part , AS/ FS will be given by the Rubber Board.

8.1.3 An indicative cost estimate with year-wise break-up of the particulars/activities is at Annexure – 2(a) (for Kerala) & at Annexure 3(a) (for Assam).

8.2 Estimates

8.2.1 After the cluster wise Projects are given Administrative Sanction and Financial Sanction (AS/FS), the Technical Assistant/Engineer concerned of the Panchayat/Line department (Rubber Board) will prepare estimates of the works as per the design/specification of Rubber Board and SoR for MGNREGA works prevailing in the area.

8.2.2 Estimates of each cluster will be based on type design of Rubber Board and Technical Sanction (TS) will be issued by the concerned official as per norms/power delegated for MGNREGA works.

8.3 Execution

8.3.1 For the MGNREGA part, GP will be the Implementation Agency. Gram Panchayat will get the works executed through Rubber Producers' Societies recognized by Rubber Board and will work in close co-ordination with the Rubber Board

8.3.2 On receipt of a request from cluster/RPS, through the GP, the PO will issue muster rolls.

8.3.3 Every cluster (preferably within the GP) will be treated as independent work and muster roll issued accordingly.

8.3.4 The format for these musters may be modified so as to manage this work efficiently. However, minimum features as prescribed in the Schedules of MGNREGA will need to be incorporated.

8.3.5 One mate from the beneficiaries in cluster or from the village may be deployed by the GP for every cluster proposed to be taken up in a Gram Panchayat. The designated mate will be responsible for the following

i) Maintain muster roll for the cluster in the GP assigned to him /her.

ii) Record attendance of semi-skilled and unskilled labour.

iii) Ensure that the activities carried out are as per the design specified by the Rubber Board and will certify to that effect.

iv) Upon completion of the weekly work in the cluster, the mate will sign the muster roll for attendance and for the quantity of work done and hand it over to the Junior Engineer/Technical Assistant for further processing.

v) The measurement of the work will be made weekly by the concerned

TA/J.En. as per the norms under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. The entries of measurement with assessment of work will be entered in measurement book as well in the muster roll.

8.4 All processes that are applicable to MGNREGA works such as: Social Audit, Maintenance of Accounts in prescribed formats, reporting in MIS etc. will be applicable to the expenditure incurred from MGNREGA funds.

9. Role of Rubber Board

The plantations covered under this convergence also will be brought under the approved plan schemes of Rubber Board and allowable financial support & free technical support will be given to the beneficiary growers. Harvesting and post-harvest processing support (technical and financial) also will be provided by the Rubber Board through RPS.

10. Non- negotiable in work execution

10.1 Only job cardholders will be employed for the unskilled part of work. It is necessary that the beneficiary is also a job card holder and work on muster as unskilled labour on his/her plantation.

10.2 Muster Rolls will be maintained on the worksite by the implementing agency concerned with copies to the Gram Panchayat.

10.3 Wage payments will be done only through banks/post office accounts unless exempted by MoRD

10.4 No contractor and labour displacement machine will be deployed for raising rubber plantations.

10.5 Record of employment generated under convergence will be maintained separately

10.6 The individual household beneficiary in the cluster shall be a household eligible under MGNREGA for work on private land/homestead

10.7 Every cluster will be treated as a MGNREGA project for the purpose of:

i) Giving a unique work ID
ii) Entry in Works and Asset register
iii) Social Audit by Gram Sabha
iv) Evaluation by Vigilance and Monitoring Committee

10.8 Each GP will maintain a complete list of all clusters with member beneficiaries with their Job Card number and activities related to rubber plantation development carried out by the clusters under MGNREGA or otherwise. In the asset register, the breakup of the assistance/subsidy utilized from Rubber Board, beneficiary's own contribution and the expenditure from MGNREGA will be shown separately.

11. Expenditure to be incurred from MGNREGA & Schemes of Rubber Board

11.1 The implementing agency will use funds from MGNREGA for activities as detailed in the illustrative exercise at **Annexure I**. Expenditure on wage component of unskilled labour under labour component and wage component of skilled/semi-skilled labour & mate under material component will be met from funds under MGNREGA,

11.2 Funds from MGNREGA to an individual beneficiary of a cluster will be restricted to one ha only.

11.3 It will be ensured that the total material cost including wages of skilled, semiskilled and the mate of all works in a Gram Panchayat, in a financial year does not exceed 40%.

11.4 The payment of unskilled, semi-skilled/ skilled labour worked under MGNREGA will be made only after measurement is taken, assessment of work made with respect to estimate/task and duly entered in Muster roll and Measurement Book by the TA/J.E

11.5 Remaining activities required to be carried out for rubber plantation development will be with the support of Rubber Board. In addition to rubber plantation development, harvesting/post-harvest processing and marketing will be funded from beneficiary's own contribution and Rubber Board will provide eligible incentives under each activity through RPS/cluster.

12. Monitoring & Report

12.1 Details of each work taken up under these convergence guidelines and all incidental details such as attendance, payment etc. from MGNREGA funds will be entered in NREGASoft just as for any other work. These works will fall in Category IV works and should be entered accordingly.

12.2 While filling up details of the work in "Work Module" it should be ensured that all details are filled correctly. Care needs to be taken to enter the area in specified units of dimension (hectare). In addition, all other details in respect of convergence such as (a) the scheme other than MGNREGA from which funds are being utilized and (b) the amount

12.3 For the amount spent from MGNREGA, the accounts will be maintained in formats as for other works that are taken up from MGNREGA.

12.4 NREGAsoft will also provide a field for entering further details such as survival, health of the plant etc. at the end of each financial year. Formats for these fields will be worked out jointly by Rubber Board and MoRD and communicated to the field functionaries.

12.5 As huge sums are being invested in these works, it is necessary that the progress is monitored periodically and jointly by officials of Rubber Board and District Programme Officer and Programme Officer. It is suggested that quarterly meetings are held between these officials and progress of each cluster communicated to Rubber Board, State Govt and MoRD. State Govts will designate a nodal officer for this purpose.

12.6 Each converging department shall carry inspection and verification as required and shall share the outcomes of the inspection and verification.

12.7 Monthly Report on the progress of implementation of convergence will be sent to the Secretary, Rural Development Department and Director, Soil & Water Conservation Department by two converging departments from the districts.

13. Activity to be piloted in Mizoram for FY 2014-15:

To begin with, rubber plantation development will be undertaken as pilot projects in selected clusters in the State of Mizoram in accordance with the convergence guidelines issued by Ministry of Rural Development. The area to be brought under rubber cultivation through these guidelines will be restricted to 500 hectares in the state in FY 2014-15 as per instruction issued by the Ministry of Rural Development. Development of Rubber plantation will be taken up in the district of Mamit (under Zawlnuam RD Block) and Kolasib (under Bilkhawthlir RD Block) for the financial year of 2014-2015. Based on the feedback, the scheme will be scaled up from next year.

14.Other issues

Both the Departments will adhere to any fresh instructions issued by Government of India or the State Government from time to time.

Sd/-L.TOCHHONG
Chief Secretary
Government of Mizoram

Memo No.F.23012/17/14-RD(NREGS) Dated Aizawl, the 4th April 2014

Copy to:

1. Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister, Mizoram, for information
2. PS to Hon'ble Minister, Rural Development Department for information
3. PS to Hon'ble Minister, Soil & Water Conservation Dept for information
4. Sr PPS to Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram for information
5. Secretary, Soil & Water Conservation Department for information
6. Director, Rural Development Department for information
7. Director, Soil & Water Conservation Department for information
8. District Programme Coordinator, MGNREGA for information and necessary action

9. District Programme Officer, MGNREGA for information and necessary action
10. Director, SIRD for information and necessary action
11. Director, SAU (MGNREGA) for information and necessary action
12. Project Director, SLMC & IAC for onformation
13. Block Development Officers for information and necessary action
14. District Officers, Soil & Water Conservation Department for information and necessary action
15. Web administrator, Rural Development Department for uploading at websites
16. Guard File

(L.TOCHHONG)
Chief Secretary
Government of Mizoram

ANNEXURE - I

CONVERGENCE OF MGNREGS UNDER MoRD AND RPD SCHEME OF RUBBER BOARD :

COST NORMS FOR 1 Ha. PLANTATION DEVELOPMENT & RELATED ACTIVITIES - NON TRADITIONAL AREA (MIZORAM)

Sl. No.	Particulars/Activities	Qty.(Vol of work)/ Number	SoR for the cluster wage 170	Labour component (Unskilled)		Material Component				Total Amount (`)	Source of Fund
			wage 170	No. of persons-days	Amount (`)	Semiskilled labour		Material cost			
			Task								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Clearing	1000 m²	22.7 m²	44	7480					7480	MGNREGS
2	Terracing	333 m³	1.35 m³	247	41990					41990	MGNREGS
3	Lining & Pitting in hard soil	211 m³	1.35 m³	156	26520					26520	MGNREGS
4	Filling & Planting	211 m³	2.07 m³			102	17340			17340	Beneficiary contribution
5	Cost of planting material @ ` 90/- per plant	500 plants						500	45000	45000	NABARD = 22500 MGNREGS = 22500
6	Fixing shades	500 plants	50 plants	10	1700					1700	Beneficiary contribution
7	Fertilizer application (Manuring) - 6 years	500 trees	33.3 trees	90	15300					15300	Beneficiary contribution
8	Cost of fertilizer @ ` 20/kg.	2750 kg.							55000	55000	Beneficiary contri. = 20000 Rubber Board = 35000
9	Weeding & Mulching (6 years)	10000 m²	62.50 m²	960	163200					163200	MGNREGS
10	Pruning	100-260	10 trees			26	4420			4420	NABARD
11	Plant protection (a) Spraying	500 trees	16.7 tree			30	5100			5100	Beneficiary contribution
12	Cost of spraying materials	lumpsum							5000	5000	Beneficiary contribution
13	(b) Others	500 trees	20 trees			25	4250			4250	NABARD
14	Cost of chemicals	lumpsum							2000	2000	Beneficiary contribution
15	Cover crop establishment	450 points	15 points	30	5100					5100	NABARD

16	Cost of cover crop seeds @ ` 480/kg.	2 kg.							960	960	Beneficiary contribution
	Drainage & other miscell. Works	1000 m²	500 m²	20	3400					3400	NABARD
17	Boundary Protection & foot path	400 mts.	20 mts	20	3400					3400	NABARD
18	Cost of materials for fencing								3000	3000	NABARD = 1980 Beneficiary contri. = 1020
19	Tools & implements								1000	1000	Beneficiary contribution
	TOTAL			1577	268090	183	31110	500	111960	411160	

Source of rates used for estimation :
SoR under MGNREGS, Mizoram, 2013-2014
Wage rate as per MoRD notification
dt. 26th February, 2013.

Labour (unskilled & skilled) -
MGNREGS support - ` 239190 (58.2%)
NABARD support - ` 20570 (5%)
Beneficiary contribution - ` 39440 (9.6%)

Material cost -
NABARD support - ` 24480 (5.9%)
Beneficiary contribution - ` 29980 (7.3%)
MGNREGS support - ` 22500 (5.5%)
Rubber Board support - ` 35000 (8.5%)

Annexure II

LABOUR REQUIREMENTFOR CONVERGENCE OF MGNREGA AND RUBBER PLANTATION UNDER SOIL & WATER CONSERVATIONCOST NORMS FOR 1 HACTRE PLANTATION DEVELOPMENT & RELATED ACTIVITIES IN MIZORAM

Sl.No	Particulars / Activities Job		Job Type	1st yr	2nd yr	3rd yr	4th yr	5th yr	6th yr	Total Mandays	Total Amount (Rs)
	Wage Rate	**Rs.170**									
1	Clearing light jungle upto 60cm height	Manday	Unskilled	44						44	
		Amount		**7480**							**7480**
2	Pitting in hard soil 75cmX75cmX75cm	Manday	Unskilled	156						156	
		Amount		**26520**							**26520**
3	Terracing 2220 m2 per hect	Manday	Unskilled	247						247	
		Amount		**41990**							**41990**
4	Filling &Planting	Manday	**Semiskilled**	102						102	
		Amount		**17340**							**17340**
5	Fixing shade	Manday	Unskilled	10						10	
		Amount		**1700**							**1700**
6	Weeding twice every year for 6 years	Manday	Unskilled	218	218	175	145	116	88	960	
		Amount		**37060**	**37060**	**29750**	**24650**	**19720**	**14960**		**163200**
7	Pruning on need basis for three years	Manday	**Semiskilled**	10	10	6				26	
		Amount		**1700**	**1700**	**1020**					**4420**
8	Manuring for 6 years twice a year	Manday	Unskilled	15	15	15	15	15	15	90	
		Amount		**2550**	**2550**	**2550**	**2550**	**2550**	**2550**		**15300**
9	Plant protection for 6 years	Manday	**Semiskilled**	7	8	10	10	10	10	55	
		Amount		**1190**	**1360**	**1700**	**1700**	**1700**	**1700**		**9350**
10	Cover crop establishment	Manday	Unskilled	15	15					30	
		Amount		**2550**	**2550**						**5100**
11	Drainage & Miscellan. works	Manday	Unskilled	10	2	2	2	2	2	20	
		Amount		**1700**	**340**	**340**	**340**	**340**	**340**		**3400**
12	Boundary protection (Fencing)&footpath	Manday	Unskilled	20						20	
		Amount		**3400**							**3400**
	Total Mandays			854	268	208	172	143	115	1760	
	Total Amount			**145180**	**45560**	**35360**	**29240**	**24310**	**19550**	**299200**	**299200**