

## **Self Help Groups of Rawain Valley Model for Uttaranchal – said Bank Officials**

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Himalayan action research centre for the last 10 years has been organizing and strengthening the self help groups at village level in Yamuna valley, which has inspired people to come forward and organise themselves into self-help groups in 48 villages, functioning under the guidance of HARC. Besides these there are 32 other similar groups formed under various schemes – swajal, Milk, SHGY and others. HARC is acting as facilitator to strengthen these groups.

Today in 48 villages of Rawain Valley 106 groups are actively involved in regular meetings, savings, and mutual help and transactions. In all about Rs.10 Lakhs+ have been given by groups to their members in internal transactions, during last 3 years. HARC took the initiative of linking groups to the bank. Following are the steps taken:

1. All groups were provided the information regarding bank Linked CCL, its utility and benefits. During the orientation session many members raised the issue of not taking loans from banks.
2. After understanding the benefit of CCL, groups were encouraged to pass a resolution in their meetings and 25 groups came forward to be linked with the banks and applied for the same.
3. A mission of apprising the groups with the norms of CCL and proper organization of their documents was carried out. After having inspected the documents group office bearers were asked to rearrange and keep these safely.
4. The applications of groups were taken to the local branches of SBI Naugaon and Badkot for consultation with officials and finally 4 applications were submitted to SBI Badkot, 4 to SBI Gadkot and 11 to SBI Naugaon. But after consultation, bank officials expressed their inability to link these groups saying that even though the groups were working well these were not organized under any scheme of Govt. that they could not be given the CCL facility.
5. The effort was made to contact & motivate district bank official at Uttarkashi for linking groups with banks. It started in April 2003. The leading bank officials inspected the groups and their documents. Bank officials were directed to link groups with banks. But even after this CCL could not be possible.

6. Assistant general manager NAWARD was then contacted to help. He made three inspection trips to Naugaon to study the activities and the organizational capacities of the groups. He contacted GM SBI Dr.Chandra, head of the state level bankers committee and got the details regarding CCL. Dr.Chandra assured that he would contact bank official in this regard.
7. On 20 July 2003 AGM SBI Shri Praveen Kumar Malhotra was invited to Naugaon as a chief guest in a function organized to distribute the bonus by the Self Help Group federation. Shri. Malhotra was given the details regarding inter group loaning schemes and the productive activities of the groups. He was very impressed by the functioning of the Self Help Groups and said that these groups could be model in Uttaranchal for others and should be linked with the bank.

Thus with constant attempt by HARC finally AGM SBI took the initiative of consulting bank officials and got the groups linked with the bank. Thereafter within 15 days by 5 Aug 2003 banks gave formats to the groups and started the process of linking. HARC made the officials of groups understand the details of information asked for in Performa or format. Banks called all the group office bearers and started the process by SBI Badkot providing a term loan of Rs.10000 to yamuna self help group of Upradi village. After this loan CCL of the group is done with the bank.

Regarding the problem of all office bearers reporting to the bank HARC further consulted the AGM SBI Dehradun and district lead bank officer Uttarkashi and it was finally decided that only 3 office bearers from a group would be reporting to bank & not all of them.

With this process till today 19 Self Help Groups have applied and been granted CCL by the bank. 27 groups were provided CCL under the golden jubilee self-employment scheme between August and October. Within 3 months 46 groups were linked with banks & provided CCL of Rs.8777493

Thus a new chapter in the process of development had started in Uttaranchal by constant efforts of HARC. No other groups which have not been started by NAVARD or under a Govt. Scheme have been linked by banks in Uttaranchal. Even bank officials have now understood the importance and potential of such scheme. HARC has been included on the Committee of banks and is invited for consultation from time to time in developmental matters.