

Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana and Performance of Banks: A Comparative Study

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ABSTRACT

Many initiatives to extend loan facilities to the poor were taken in the last century by the national policy planners. Among them microfinance through Self Help Groups (SHGs) offers the finance discipline a possible avenue to make a significant difference in the lives of millions of poor people. Microfinance provides enhance access of banking to the rural poor through SHG-bank linkage programme. In the present paper an attempt to has been made to examine the trend and growth of microfinance by different banks under Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) scheme in two districts of West Bengal, on the basis of secondary sources of data. The objective of this paper is to analyse the bank-wise variation in physical and financial performance of SHGs under SGSY scheme over the districts of West Bengal. The study concluded that there remains wide variation in the performance of different banks in rural microfinance over the districts of West Bengal.

Key Words : Microfinance, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Financial Inclusion, Physical performance, Financial performance.

INTRODUCTION

The overall development of a nation is closely depended on the development of the rural economy. During the last few decades it has been seen that the over centralized planning conceived at the top rather failed to continue the trickledown effect percolated to the down trodden people. As a result the vicious cycle of poverty till is in operating mode waiting for a big push to achieve the overall development. There is no denying that during the last few decades our central planning authority has given greater emphasis on rural development through the various anti-poverty and other developmental programmes. But the fact remains that in spite our honest effort on the part of our Republic a large number of households in our rural areas remains in nexus of poverty like other under developed countries of this Globe. There is a huge gap between the two points. One is the point of sanction and the other is the point of execution. What the

Late Prime Minister Rajib Gandhi, in late eighties had remarked till as it is in the second decade of the twenty first Century. Thus a big push once again is needed to uplift the down trodden people from the nexus of vicious cycle of poverty. Direct pumping of money in the form of a small amount of loan may be act as a catalyst for the development of the poor people in the rural areas and may be appeared as the big push.

Thus Microfinance to Self Help Groups (SHGs) may be considered as a vital option for meeting the financial needs of those poorer sections of the society. Now Microfinance is the branded form of financial development that has its primary aim to alleviate the Poverty of the down trodden people. At the same time it is equally true that the problem of economic inequality which arises in consequence of improper implementation of development programmes. In this scenario Microfinance may play the role of catalyst. Micro finance in the form of SHG-linkage model has been able to inspire

hope in the lives of thousands of rural poor, particularly rural women and enable them to contribute to their families' well being through various economic activities including savings and borrowings. Through the generation of self-employment and income, the rural women are able to some extent to reduce the poverty. Further, Microfinance influences on the quality of life of the rural poor women by providing easy finance. It is now an eminent equipment or rather to say a powerful tool for empowering rural poor women by shifting them from debt-trap of informal credit sources to trap-free formal credit system.

Of late, microfinance under SGSY spread very quickly in all parts of the country. However, this spread effect of Microfinance is less uniform as we have a look over the States of our Republic. Further, within the state we have also noticed reasonable disparities in physical and financial performance and even in gradation. The present paper analyses the physical achievements of SHGs under SGSY in terms of formation of SHGs, their gradation pattern. The judgment on the financial performances under the heads of saving and credit linkages is also come under the purview of this write up. The entire analysis of this chapter is based on the secondary data and literature collected from the various reports published by the Government and mainly from The District Rural Development Cell of the selected districts.

Study Design:

The first section of this write-up covers the introduction. Our second section deals with the objective of the study, Research Methodology and study area. The third section presents a short overview of the status of the Self-Help Groups in West Bengal. In section four we discuss about the Physical Growth and Physical performance of SHGs in our study districts CoochBehar and Bankura. In section five we made a critical assessment of Financial Performance of the SHGs in the said districts. Finally we try to give some findings and concluding remarks in sixth section of this write-up.

Objectives of the Study :

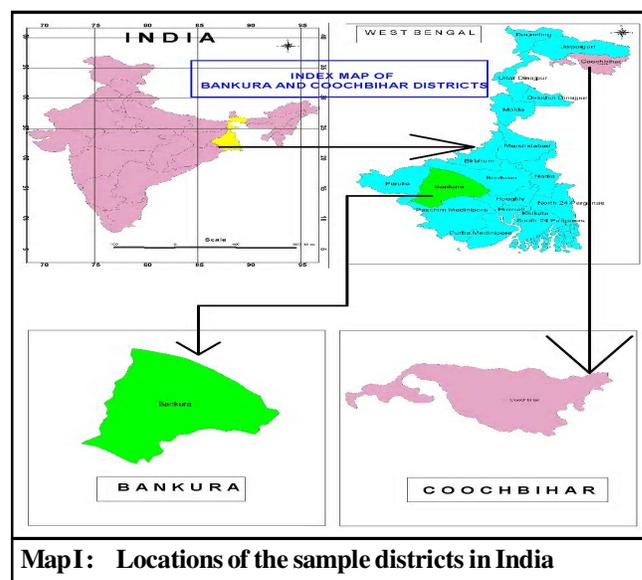
1. To find out the workability of different banks in the field of micro-finance through SHGs under SGSY in the proposed area.
2. To find out how far the physical growth of SHGs associated with the financial achievement of the groups?

3. To make a compare of the growth of SHG movement under SGSY in the two regions of West Bengal.

METHODOLOGY

Study area:

For the purpose of the study we have purposively selected two districts from the rural economy of West Bengal. These two districts are Cooch Behar and Bankura. We select these two districts because of the fact that these two districts are backward districts as per our census definition. Another reason is that the geographical location of these two districts. The district Cooch Behar is located at the northern portion of our state and the other district Bankura is situated in the southern portion of the state economy of West Bengal. Locations of the sample districts in India as well as in West Bengal are given in Map I.



This study is based on the secondary data and literature. Secondary data has been collected from various sources like District Rural Development Cells, Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal, Census Report 2011 and data collected from articles published in journals. A very simple mathematical tool has been used for the presentation of the data. All the computations are being made on the basis of the data receipt from District Rural Development Cell.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Status of SHGs under SGSY in West Bengal:

In India, a number of SHGs were created in the 1980s for providing credit facilities to the poor, especially women, in both urban and rural areas. These SHGs stumbled upon a surprising finding: by targeting women, repayment rates came in well over 95 per cent, higher than most traditional banks. Impressed by those repayment rates, institutions like National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) began increasing their lending to SHGs in India. Government of India also provide sustainable income to poor people living in rural areas of the country has launched Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) on April 1, 1999. The SGSY programme, in the line of NABARD's SHG-bank Linkage programme, intended to extend micro-finance services to rural poor belonging to the socially and economically backward classes and the tribal population particularly in the economically backward regions, who are largely dependent on money lenders for meeting their emergent credit requirement for food, shelter and social ceremonies. The District Rural Development Cell (DRDC) has been authorized to

encourage the rural people to form SHGs and to supervise the working of these SHGs.

In the following Table 1, we rank the SHGs formed in different districts up to the year 2013 by all the banks in the respective districts. As per our ranking Murshidabad becomes the top of the list followed by Midnapur West. Our study districts Cooch Behar and Bankura rank, respectively 9th and 11th position. All are also given in Fig. 1 to visualize the SHG formation.

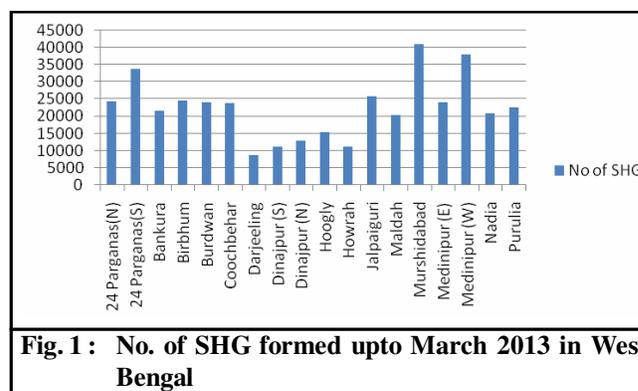


Fig. 1 : No. of SHG formed upto March 2013 in West Bengal

We also calculate the rate of growth of the SHGs in our study State considering 2009 as base year. During the reference period the average growth rate of the State

Sr. No.	District/State	No. of SHGs formed up to march 2013 by all Banks	Rank(R)	Per cent Growth (2009-2013)
1.	24 Parganas(N)	24252	6	58.32
2.	24 Parganas(S)	33509	3	139.08
3.	Bankura	21408	11	48.88
4.	Birbhum	24512	5	43.55
5.	Burdwan	23931	8	40.82
6.	Coochbehar	23692	9	88.87
7.	Darjeeling	8730	18	58.18
8.	Dinajpur (S)	11033	17	13.20
9.	Dinajpur (N)	12833	15	24.26
10.	Hoogly	15328	14	124.88
11.	Howrah	11063	16	60.89
12.	Jalpaiguri	25600	4	19.38
13.	Maldah	20207	13	31.09
14.	Murshidabad	40855	1	41.37
15.	Medinipur (E)	23906	7	35.12
16.	Medinipur (W)	37819	2	36.03
17.	Nadia	20765	12	63.13
18.	Purulia	22528	10	11.80
State	West Bengal	401971	-----	46.84

Source: Panchayat & Rural Development Department, WB.

Note: All Banks include United Bank of India (UBI), State Bank of India (SBI), Bangiya Gramin Vikash Bank (BGVB), Central Bank of India (CBI), Bank of India (BOI), United Commercial Bank (UCO), Punjab National Bank (PNB), Uttarbanga Kshetriya Gramin Bank (UBK Gramin Bank), Canara, Allahabad, Syndicate, Union Bank.

becomes 46.84. We have find that 8 districts of our State record the growth rates which are above the State growth rates. The highest growth rate has been captured by the district 24 Pargana (South) followed by the Hoogly district. Our two Sub-Samples, Cooch Behar and Bankura recorded 88.87 and 48.88 percentages of growth rates during the same reference period.

Physical performance of the SHGs under SGSY:

Now we open our analysis to our selected districts. To judge the condition of physical achievements of the SHGs formed by different banks in the two districts we have considered two parameters. They are total number of SHGs formed since inception, number of SHGs that have passed Grade II. Tables 2 provide us the information according to our first parameter. From the following tables it is clear that seven commercial banks and UBK Gramin Bank (Regional Rural Bank) in CoochBehar and ten commercial banks and BGVB (Regional Rural Bank) in Bankura are associated with the operations of SHGs under SGSY.

Bank wise formation of SHGs:

Table 2A and Table 2B depict the bank wise formation of Self Help Group under SGSY in CoochBehar and Bankura, respectively. From Table 2A and 2B we see that since the inception of SGSY on 01.4.99 to March 2013 the percentage of group formed by commercial banks stand at 61.27 per cent in CoochBehar and 52.06 per cent in Bankura. Same for the Regional Rural Banks stand at 38.73 per cent and 47.94 per cent for CoochBehar and Bankura, respectively. However, if

Name of the Bank		Group formed in CoochBehar (Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)	
		Number	Percentage
Commercial	UBI	1060	4.47
Banks	SBI	3122	13.18
	CBI	8580	36.21
	UCO	140	0.59
	BOI	147	0.62
	Allahabad	786	3.32
	Bank of Baroda	681	2.87
	Commercial Banks Total	14516	61.27
RRB (UBK Gramin Bank)	9176	38.73	
Total	23692	100.00	

Source: Panchayat & Rural Development Department, WB
Note: RRB means Regional Rural Bank.

Name of the Bank		Group formed in Bankura (Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)	
		Number	percentage
Commercial	UBI	2922	13.65
Banks	SBI	2838	13.26
	CBI	415	1.94
	UCO	1049	4.90
	BOI	313	1.46
	Allahabad	1440	6.73
	PNB	1540	7.19
	Canara	312	1.46
	Union	183	0.85
	Syndicate	134	0.63
	Commercial Banks Total	11146	52.06
RRB (BGVB)	10262	47.94	
Total	21408	100.00	

Source: Panchayat & Rural Development Department, WB
Note: RRB means Regional Rural Bank.

we have a look in the number of the SHG formed by different commercial banks in CoochBehar during the reference period, we see that CBI holds the first position (36.21 %) followed by SBI (13.18 %) and UBI (4.47 %). On the other hand, UBI accounted the major share (13.65 %) in Bankura followed by SBI (13.26 %) and PNB (7.19 %). However, from the above tables it is also clear that as a whole the total number of group formed by all the banks in CoochBehar is higher than the Bankura during the reference period.

Bank wise gradation of SHGs:

Gradation is an important indicator to measure the performance of the groups already formed. There is a system of grading of SHGs into Grade-I and Grade-II to assess the achievements of SHGs, towards maturity level, as per the norms stipulated under SGSY Guideline. Gradation of a SHG depends on saving potentiality of the group, good working of the revolving fund, and good maintenance of the account books, regularity of group meetings and attendance of the members and returns on repayments.

SHGs that are in existence for about six months and follow the stipulated norms under SGSY Guidelines, are considered as Grade-I groups and become eligible for getting Revolving Fund from DRDC. After successfully crossing the hurdle of first gradation groups are considered for second gradation. SHGs that are in existence for about six months as Grade-I and have

demonstrated the potential of viable groups become Grade-II as per the stipulated norms under SGSY Guidelines. Such groups are eligible to receive the assistance for Economic Activity in the form of bank loan and subsidy. Here, we have considered only the final gradation *i.e.* the number of SHGs that have passed Grade-II to examine the performance of the banks that are involved in SHG-Bank linkage programme under SGSY in the said districts during the reference period.

Bank wise performances regarding the gradation of the SHGs are given in Table 3A and Table 3B for our said districts, CoochBehar and Bankura respectively. If we consider the percentage of groups that have passed Grade II in total then from Tables 3A and 3B, it is clear that the CoochBehar shows better performance

compared to Bankura. Not only that, we also observe the better performance of Regional Rural Banks in percentage terms compared to the commercial banks taken together for both the districts.

If we consider the percentage of groups that have passed Grade II in case of the commercial banks individually then we see for the first three it is in order of Bank of Baroda (35.10 %), Allahabad (33.33 %) and UBI (27.92 %) in CoochBehar. The same for Bankura is UCO (27.65 %), BOI (24.28 %) and PNB (21.82 %). Thus we see that out of total group formed only around 25 per cent becomes viable. In our study it varies from 5.97 per cent at syndicate bank of Bankura district to 35.10 per cent at Bank of Baroda of CoochBehar district.

Table 3A : Number of SHGs that have passed Grade II (CoochBehar)				
(Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)				
Name of the Bank		CoochBehar		
		Total no. of SHGs formed	No. of SHGs that have passed Grade II	In percentage figure
Commercial Banks	UBI	1060	296	27.92
	SBI	3122	863	27.64
	CBI	8580	2317	27.00
	UCO	140	19	13.57
	BOI	147	20	13.61
	Allahabad	786	262	33.33
	Bank of Baroda	681	239	35.10
	Commercial Banks Total	14516	4016	27.66
RRB (UBK Gramin Bank)		9176	2586	28.18
Total		23692	6602	27.87

Source: DRDC Cooch Behar.

Table 3B : Number of SHGs that have passed Grade II (Bankura)				
(Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)				
Name of the Bank		Bankura		
		Total no. of SHGs formed	No. of SHGs that have passed Grade II	In Percentage figure
Commercial Banks	UBI	2922	607	20.77
	SBI	2838	563	19.84
	CBI	415	76	18.31
	UCO	1049	290	27.65
	BOI	313	76	24.28
	Allahabad	1440	252	17.50
	PNB	1540	336	21.82
	Canara	312	64	20.51
	Union	183	30	16.39
	Syndicate	134	8	5.97
	Commercial Banks Total	11146	2302	20.65
RRB (BGVB)		10262	2321	22.62
Total		21408	4623	21.59

Source: DRDC Bankura

Financial performance of the SHGs under SGSY:

In this section we have tried to assess the overall financial performance of the SHGs of our Samples by the number of savings linked SHGs and by the number of credit link SHGs. In savings linked analysis importance has been given to bank wise per SHG savings and for credit link we have given importance to bank wise per SHG credit disbursement and per SHG member credit disbursement. All is given in Tables 4 and 5, respectively. Again Table 4 is being divided in 4A and 4B giving the information of saving link for CoochBehar and Bankura, respectively. Similarly, Table 5A and 5B provide us the

Table 4A : Saving A/C Linkage of SHGs (Cooch Behar) (Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)			
Name of the Bank	Savings Linked SHGs	Amount saved (Rs. in Lakh)	Per SHG Saving (Rs.)
UBI	1060	959.93	90559.43
SBI	3122	1482.73	47492.95
CBI	8580	3766.02	43893.01
UCO	140	44.35	31678.57
BOI	147	49.48	33659.86
Allahabad	786	365.44	46493.64
Bank of Baroda	681	223.62	32837.00
Commercial Banks	14516	6891.57	47475.68
Total			
RRB (UBK Gramin Bank)	9176	3904.67	42553.07
Total	23692	10796.24	45569.14

Source: DRDC Cooch Behar

Table 4B : Saving A/C Linkage of SHGs (Bankura) (Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)			
Name of the Bank	Savings Linked SHGs	Amount Saved (Rs. in Lakh)	Per SHG Saving (Rs.)
UBI	2922	242.70	8305.95
SBI	2838	236.99	8350.60
CBI	415	75.50	18192.77
UCO	1049	102.05	9728.31
BOI	313	37.65	12028.75
Allahabad	1440	139.25	9670.14
PNB	1540	136.95	8892.86
Canara	312	30.90	9903.85
Union	183	17.22	9409.84
Syndicate	134	99.50	74253.73
Commercial Banks	11146	1118.71	10036.87
Total			
RRB (BGVB)	10262	846.20	8245.96
Total	21408	1964.91	9178.39

Source: DRDC Bankura

credit link of the SHGs in our Sub-Samples.

Ban wise saving linkages:

All successful microfinance programmes require that potential borrowers first take part in a saving programme. Usually the group start with one type of 'compulsory' regular savings, where in all the members periodically save a fixed amount as decided by all members in its group meeting. In this way groups become savings linked SHGs. Since saving is compulsory for every member of SHG, because of this compulsion members become succeeded to accumulate a reasonably good amount in their SHG account. The information regarding bank wise savings linked SHGs and their corresponding saved amount and per SHG saving for the said districts are given in the following tables.

If we consider the per SHG savings of our Sub-Samples considering the time frame up to March 2013, then we see that the SHGs of CoochBehar are succeeded to perform nearly five times more saving than the SHGs of Bankura. Again, if we make a compare between per SHG average saving of the commercial banks taken together and regional rural banks then we see on the average it is higher for the commercial banks taken together compared to the later in both the districts. If we order the first three commercial banks in terms of per SHG saving then it would be in order of UBI (Rs. 90559.43), SBI (Rs.47492.95) and Allahabad (Rs. 46493.64) in CoochBehar and same for Bankura is Syndicate (Rs. 74253.73), CBI (Rs. 18192.77) and BOI (Rs. 12028.75).

Bank wise credit linkages:

After the bank becomes satisfied about the operations of the group in the account and the credentials of the group, the bank considers the group for lending purposes. The group is eligible for borrowing from the bank in a multiple of it's saving. The bank lends to the group, which, in turn gives loans to its members in accordance with the group's policy. At this stage the group is said to be credit linked. The information regarding bank wise credit linkages for the said districts are given in the following table.

If we have a look on disbursement of bank credit to SHGs, during the reference period then also we see that the SHGs of our first sample CoochBehar have succeeded to avail more amount of money as credit from the formal institutions compare to the SHGs of our second sample

Bankura. On an average it figures to more than one and half times in our first sub-sample than our second sub-sample. Same is more or less true, as revealed from Tables 5A and 5B, in case of credit disbursement to per SHG members also. Again, total amount disbursed and per member disbursement of credit are higher in case of commercial banks taken together compared to regional rural banks in both the districts. But what is interesting is that per SHG disbursement of credit is higher for RRBs in both the districts compared to commercial banks taken together. Finally if we have a look at the per SHG disbursement of credit and per member disbursement of credit among the commercial banks taken individually then we see that there remains wide variation in the amount disbursed.

Some Important Findings:

From the above discussions we see that in terms of growth of SHGs our two Sub-Samples differ in a very high of level of percentage. If we make a comparison of growth of SHGs under SGSY by all the MFIs considering the time-frame 2009-2013 then we see from Table 1, that the two growth rates for CoochBehar and Bankura are 88.87 and 48.88 per cent, respectively.

Again if we consider the total group formed up to March 2013 in two districts by all the banks then we see that it is 10.67 per cent higher in CoochBehar compared to Bankura. In both cases CoochBehar gains higher percentage. However if we make a compare among the commercial banks total and RRBs in terms of group formed then we see that commercial banks total

Table 5A : Cash Credit (C/C) Linkage of SHGs (Cooch Behar) (Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)

Name of the Bank	Credit-Linked SHGs	No. of SHG members linked to credit	Amount Disbursed (Rs. In Lakh)	Per SHG disbursement (Rs.)	Per member disbursement (Rs.)
UBI	537	5694	299.41	55756.05	5258.34
SBI	2108	23078	1734.74	82293.17	7516.86
CBI	4942	40652	3170.59	64156.01	7799.35
UCO	96	909	40.90	42604.17	4499.45
BOI	81	747	96.80	119506.17	12958.50
Allahabad	403	4322	242.22	60104.22	5604.35
Bank of Baroda	421	2948	235.96	56047.51	8004.07
Commercial Banks Total	8588	78937	5820.62	67776.20	7373.75
RRB (UBK Gramin Bank)	5655	59041	3998.03	70699.03	6771.62
Total	14243	137978	9818.65	68936.67	7116.10

Source: DRDC Cooch Behar.

Table 5B : Cash Credit (C/C) Linkage of SHGs (Bankura) (Since 1.4.99 to 31.3.2013)

Name of the Bank	Credit-Linked SHGs	No. of SHG members linked to credit	Amount Disbursed (Rs. In Lakh)	Per SHG disbursement (Rs.)	Per member disbursement (Rs.)
UBI	1945	26966	836.89	43027.76	3103.50
SBI	1764	17382	666.98	37810.66	3837.19
CBI	208	2157	48.79	23456.73	2261.94
UCO	754	7911	291.34	38639.26	3682.72
BOI	206	2262	75.87	36830.10	3354.11
Allahabad	952	10258	302.48	31773.11	2948.72
PNB	920	10078	288.00	31304.35	2857.71
Canara	221	2338	63.87	28900.45	2731.82
Union	99	958	205.98	208060.61	21501.04
Syndicate	85	880	19.88	23388.24	2259.09
Commercial Banks Total	7154	81190	2800.08	39140.06	3448.80
RRB (BGVB)	6665	92062	2620.65	39319.58	2846.61
Total	13819	173252	5420.73	39226.64	3128.81

Source: DRDC Bankura

accounted the more share.

From Tables 3A and 3B we see that, the number of SHG that have passed Grade-II up to March 2013 in CoochBehar and Bankura are 27.87 per cent and 21.59 per cent, respectively. However, for the same we get slightly higher percentage in case of RRBs compared to commercial banks taken together in both the districts.

Finally, per SHG saving, per SHG loan disbursement and per SHG member loan disbursement all are again significantly high in CoochBehar in comparison to Bankura. On the other hand, commercial banks taken together shows the better performance in case of per SHG saving and per SHG member loan disbursement compared to RRBs in both the districts. But, per SHG loan disbursement is higher in case of RRBs compared to commercial banks taken together in both the districts.

Recommendation and concluding remarks:

Thus we do not get any significant difference in the physical and financial performance of the commercial banks taken together and RRBs in the said districts. But, the empirical evidence of the study shows that there is wide variation among the commercial banks regarding their physical and financial achievements. For example, the number of group formed by CBI and UCO Banks in CoochBehar are 8580 (36.21 %) and 140 (0.59 %), respectively. But the share of CBI and UCO Banks in Bankura for the same are 415 (1.94 %) and 1049 (4.90 %), respectively. We get similar type of variation in case of per SHG saving, per SHG loan disbursement and per SHG member loan disbursement also.

Thus we can say, on the basis of above inferences that the SHG movement is not uniform across the districts of West Bengal. This is true for our Sub-Samples also. Bankura is lagging behind of CoochBehar in all respect of our chosen indicators. But what remains to say here is that in spite of higher SHG saving in CoochBehar the per SHG credit disbursement is not so high in CoochBehar.

However, success or failure story of SHG in a district in all respects depends on the workability of members, Panchayats, government officials, bank officials and SHG promoting institutions. So the responsibility of performance goes to all. Various studies indicate that many of the SHGs formed have already become defunct for lack of facilitation, nursing and hand holding support. Again disbursement of loan per SHG is significantly low in West Bengal compared to national average.

To increase outreach of the banking sector and ensure greater financial inclusion, they should change their traditional method of lending and be innovative. Measures should be taken on a priority basis to improve the quality of the groups in low performance areas and balance allocation of resources should be done to raise the overall performance of the state so that our ultimate goal of eradication of poverty and empowerment of women through the functioning of SHGs can be achieved.

Group activities should also be promoted by officials. Training workshops must be organised. If the SHGs come up with a finished product; there should be infrastructural support for its marketing. The time has come when the policy makers should realise that any Micro finance programme is not like a "Fire and Forget" kind of missile. It needs constant and sustained monitoring.

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