

My No : NEP/RD/By Law Revision

AMENDED RULES FOR REGISTRATION AND FUNCTIONING
OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT SOCIETIES / WOMEN RURAL DEVELOPMENT
SOCIETIES IN THE NORTH-EAST PROVINCE

In terms of Circular No.A/C/3/1/1 dated 18.09.1978 issued by the Director, Department of Rural Development, Colombo as amended by Circular dated 31.10.1978 and by virtue of assignment of the subject of Rural Development under the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to Provincial Councils and further to Circulars issued by the Department of Rural Development, North East Province, I, Devendra Duraisamy Wijjaludchumi, Director, Department of Rural Development, North East Province, do hereby proclaim that I have approved the following rules which shall come into force hereafter.

This 1st day of July 2006

Director of Rural Development,
North East Province,
Trincomalee

Registration of..... Rural Development Society / Women Rural
Development Society

CHAPTER 1

STRUCTURE OF SOCIETIES

1. There shall be a Rural Development Society (RDS) and a Woman Rural Development Society (WRDS) for every village subject to the following conditions:-
 - a) There shall be a minimum of at least 30 families in a village /villages of one Grama Sevaka Division.
 - b) Two or three villages within one Grama Sevaka Division can unite to form one such society provided the number of families shall not exceed 250.
2. Sufficient notice and publicity must be given in each and every village by the Grama Sevaka Niladhari and the Rural Development Officer of the area as to the objectives of societies, holding

of inaugural meeting for selection of office-bearers with venue, date and time after giving 14 days prior notice.

3. A minimum of 51 percent of the total population of families in every village shall be enrolled as members of every society.

4. Membership

4.1. Requirements for membership in a society are

- a) Be a citizen of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
- b) Be residence of the particular village.
- c) Be qualified under the provisions of Article 14(2) of the Constitution of Sri Lanka.
- d) Be over 18 years of age.
- e) Be of sound mind
- f) Be have paid a membership fee of not less than Rs.120/= per annum.

4.2. Loss or lapse of membership occurs by following ways.

- a) By death
- b) By leaving his /her village and settling in another village
- c) By losing any one or more of the requirements as stated in above sub paragraph
- d) By failing to attend three (03) consecutive meetings without informing the President or Secretary.
- e) By becoming a member in another Rural Development Society / Women Rural Development Society.
- f) By expulsion for violating any one or more rules and regulations of the society upon a decision of the society concerned

5. Every society so formed shall bear the name of its village.

6. Every society so formed shall apply for registration in the requisite format with supporting documents to the Rural Development Officer of the area who after careful examination forward same with his observation to Divisional Rural Development Officer who in turn submit same with his recommendation to the Director, Department of Rural Development for registration. The Director of Rural Development has full powers and discretion in the matter of registration of any society.

7. Every Rural Development Society / Women Rural Development Society shall have the following objectives.

7.1. Development Work Planned Activities:

Every society shall plan its work activities to create self employment opportunities from available resources in its locality, to increase the income generation and skill training without doing any harm to its beneficiaries.

7.2. Health Activities:

Every Society has a duty to maintain good health conditions and habits of the people and to take preventive measures against the spread of any infectious disease.

7.3. Education:

Every RDS/WRDS should work for improving the pre-school education of the children, making arrangements for evening tuitions classes, maintaining adult learning centers and other educational activities in the village.

7.4. Protection of Environment:

Every RDS/WRDS must take steps to protect and improve the environment of the area by taking development activities of the land and its natural resources in order to derive there from maximum benefits especially from water resources fisheries and aquatic resources, wildlife, forestry resources and soil conservation together with regulatory activities relating to the discharge of waste and pollutants.

7.5. Development of Women Welfare:

Woman development centers have to be organized in villages to help women in acquiring knowledge of vocational training, marketing and rural handloom spinning and allied women development activities.

7.6. Vocational and Skill Training Activities:

Every society has to provide vocational and skill training to youth so as to enable them to find self employment.

7.7. Agriculture Development:

As the members of societies are from villages, planned activities should be provided for development of agriculture and farming in villages.

7.8. Animal Husbandry:

With the advice of veterinary doctors, animal husbandry activities could be initiated to increase income and provide employment for villages.

7.9. Cottage Industries:

With available resources in hand such as cane, coconut shells and eackle and palmyrah products, cottage industries could be commenced to increase self employment and marketing facilities for both women and men.

7.10. Micro Credit Activities:

Micro credit facilities are to be provided by way of loans to start livelihood activities and to provide home for homeless people.

7.11. Shramadana Activities:

Societies have a duty to organize shramadana (Sharing of labour) to keep villages clean, to construct roads and to do any other common work at village level.

7.12. Religious Development Activities:

Societies must encourage villagers to follow their religious activities and observances.

7.13. Art and cultural Development Activities:

Societies have a duty to develop cultural activities and encourage the activities of artists.

7.14. Sport Development and Entertaining Activities:

Societies should encourage sports activities in well planned way and form musical groups to provide entertainment and to train others to participate

7.15. Development Ethical Activities:

Societies have to get support from governmental and non governmental sectors to eradicate narcotic and allied evil borne activities so as to build healthy societies.

7.16. Activities for Special Needs Beneficiaries:

Societies have a duty to identify special need children, elders, women and disabled persons to help and train them to live healthy and comfortably

8. Meetings

- 9.1. The inaugural meeting of a society must be attended by the Grama Sevaka Niladhari, the Rural Development Officer of the area. It is advisable to invite the Divisional Secretary, District Rural Development officer or other government authority of similar rank to participate in the said meeting. Election of new office bearers shall take place at this meeting.
- 8.2. The general meeting shall be held at least once in every three months. The Secretary shall inform the members in writing individually at least seven (07) days ahead and by exhibiting notices in public places.
- 8.3. Special General Meetings will be held on request of the Executive Committee or the President or a written request of 51 of the members or the Rural Development Officer. The Secretary shall inform in writing to the members Individually at least five (5) days ahead and also by exhibiting notices of Such meetings in public places.
- 8.4. Executive Committee meetings shall be held monthly after giving notice to its members in writing at least five (5) days ahead by the Secretary.
- 8.5. Special Committee Meeting shall be held on the written request of the President, or Divisional Secretary of the area or the Rural Development Officer after giving three (3) days notice in writing to its members.
- 8.6. Annual general meeting shall be held every year. The Secretary shall inform the members individually in writing at least 14 days ahead of the meeting and by notices exhibited in public places as to the venue date and time. The Rural Development Officer and the Grama Sevaka of the area have to be present at such meeting, while the Divisional Secretary of the area is to be invited to participate. Election of office bearers for the year shall be the main item in the agenda of the year. In the event of the failure to convene the annual general meeting and to elect the new office-bearers, the Divisional Secretary, or the District Rural Development Officer or the Rural Development Officer of the area is empowered to call an annual general meeting and /or elect the office-bearers of the society for the year.

- 8.7. The quorum for a special or annual general meeting shall be 2/3 of the total members registered. The quorum for a committee meeting shall be seven (07).
- 8.8. Any questions /motions to be discussed at the annual or special general meeting of the society shall be submitted to the Secretary at least seven (07) days before the date of commencement of such meeting. The Secretary shall schedule such matters in order of importance to be taken at the coming or subsequent meetings.

9. Executive committee

- 9.1. At the inaugural and annual general meeting of the society the following Office - bearers shall be elected either unanimously or by voting.
- i. President
 - ii. Vice President
 - iii. Secretary
 - iv. Assistant Secretary
 - v. Treasurer
 - vi. 8 Committee members
- 9.2. The above elected office-bearers and committee members shall form the Executive Committee of the society
- 9.3. The elected President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer shall not serve more than two consecutive terms
- 9.4. a) The Committee members elected shall represent the entire village in its varied community level.
- b) At least one member to be representative of non-governmental organization
- c) A member loses his / her post if he or she had failed to attend three consecutive meetings without informing the President or Secretary
- d) A person who had been convicted by court and sentenced to imprisonment cannot be eligible to be an office-bearer or a member of the committee.
- e) The committee has power to fill a vacancy occurred during its period of office subject to approval by the general body on a subsequent general or special meeting

9.5. An Auditor shall be nominated by the committee to audit the accounts of the society to be submitted at the annual general together with a report

9.6. The Rural Development Officer of the area shall be the official advisor to the society and he has the right to examine any document and proceedings of the general body and committee.

9.7. **The duties of the office bearers:**

9.7.1. **President:**

To preside at the meetings and run the development plans of the society

9.7.2. **Vice President:**

To assist the president and preside at the meeting in the absence of the president.

9.7.3. **Secretary:**

a) Secretary has to maintain the following documents:

- A Register containing the names and addresses including the numbers of the house of the members.
- Minutes of the annual general meetings.
- Minutes of the committee meetings
- Attendance register of the annual general and the committee meetings
- Inventory Register
- Log book.
- Inward and outward registers
- The letterheads and the rubber stamps of the President, Secretary, Treasurer and the society
- Activity reports and the progress reports of the society
- The registration certificates of the society.
- Any other document relating to the said society

b) Submit the progress report monthly to the Rural Development Officer.

c) Take action according to the decision taken at the annual, general and special meetings.

d) Submit the required records to Rural Development Officer, District Rural Development Officer and Divisional Secretary, whenever they requested for

- e) Submit a copy of the minutes of annual general meeting and the copy of the approved budget and accounts through the Rural Development Officer to District Rural Development Officer and Divisional Secretary within one week after the meeting.
- f) In the event of resigning from the post of secretary, he/she should inform the reason to the committee and RDO and hand over all the documents to the newly selected secretary.

9.7.4. Assistant Secretary:

To assist the secretary and cooperate to run the society smoothly

9.7.5. Treasurer:

It is the duty of the treasurer to keep all accounts and funds of the society safely and the accounts books, bank accounts, cashbooks, cheque books and be responsible for all transactions. The treasurer has to maintain the accounts correctly and prepare the accounts carefully and submit them to the Auditor and to the RDO for inspection every three months. In the event of resigning from the post of treasurer, he/she should inform the reason in writing to the Committee and RDO. The Committee shall approve the resignation only on the handing over all the documents to the newly elected treasurer.

9.7.6. Committee members:

Duties of the committee members are to help the Secretary Treasurer to collect the membership fees and inform the development activities from their respective areas.

10. Every society shall have a Board of Trustees consisting of the President the Secretary and the Treasurer of the society. Its functions are as follows.

- a) The Board shall be responsible for all assets and funds of the society that are supplied by the Department of Rural Development and other governmental and non-governmental sectors.
- b) No assets shall be disposed, transferred or donated without the written permission of the Director of Rural Development Department.
- c) The Board of Trustees is entitled to enter into any agreement to preserve the assets and funds of the society and to develop the activities of the society.

- d) In the event of death, resignation or expulsion of the president or secretary the committee shall nominate a suitable member and approval has to be obtained at the next annual general meeting of the society.
- e) In the event of the post of treasurer following vacant under any circumstances, it shall be filled within two weeks by calling a special general meeting.
- f) At the end of every year the Board shall submit a statement of assets and funds and related financial matters to the Auditor and thereafter submit same with the report of the Auditor at the general annual meeting of the society.

11. The funds of the society shall by following ways

- a) Every society is entitled to receive governmental and non-governmental grants and assistance for development project activities, either by money or materials. On completion of every development activity accounts should be prepared and submitted to the general body of the society for approval. Such accounts should thereafter be certified by the Rural Development Officer and submit same through the Divisional Secretary to the District office of the Department of Rural Development.
- b) Temporary funds can be raised to meet any unexpected disaster and damage caused to the village with the permission of the Divisional Secretary of the area. Within three months the expenditure accounts should be completed and statement of account should be approved by the general body and thereafter submit same through the Rural Development Officer to the Divisional Secretary and District office of the Rural Development.
- c) In the event of urgent needs of the society special funds can be raised within the region with the permission of District Secretary and District Rural Development Officer. Estimates of such urgent activities have to prepared and submitted to the District Rural Development Officer through the Divisional Secretary. Thereafter a statement of accounts involved has to be prepared and submitted accordingly.
- d) The society in order to implement any activity relating to its objectives can collect and /or receive donations from its members, public or governmental or non governmental organization

or from any other source. Whatever profit accrued on such ventures have to be utilized for further development or to initiate any new venture

- 12. a)** Every society shall have a society account at a recognized bank in or close to the area of the said society. The first signatory shall be the treasurer and the second signatory shall be either the president or in his absence the secretary. The Divisional Secretary and the Rural Development Officer shall certify the specimen signatures. The signature cards of the president the secretary and the treasurer shall be certified by the Rural Development Officer and sent to the Bank.
- b) The treasurer can have a cash of Rs.1000/= for immediate expenses.
- c) The funds received by society shall be deposited at the bank account promptly.
- d) In the event of refusal by the Divisional Secretary and Rural Development Officer to sanction any withdrawal of funds, the matter can be brought to the notice of District Rural Development Officer who shall takes up the matter with the District Secretary of the area for obtaining approval for such withdrawal.
- e) The society with the approval of the Rural Development Officer can give a donation of Rs.500/= at a time. Any amount exceeding Rs.500/= and upto Rs.1000/= has to be approved by the Divisional Secretary of the area. Any Amount in excess of Rs.1000/= has to be approved by the Director of Rural Development Department.
- 13.** The financial year for any society shall be from 1st January to 31st December of the year.
- 14. a)** Any society can undertake to do any contract works with the government department or semi government or non-governmental organizations.
- b) Permission for doing such work must be obtained from the Divisional Secretary through the Rural Development Officer before the signing of any contract agreement.

- c) Maintenance of accounts for each and every contract should be examined by the Rural Development Officer who shall thereafter sanction payment by the society.
 - d) All contracts money shall be deposited at the saving account of the society.
 - e) Only five percent of the total sum of contract money could be used for administration cost.
 - f) The society shall not hand over any contract to sub contractors.
 - g) At the end of every financial year the accounts of contract works should be separately shown and submitted at the annual general meeting of the society.
- 15.**
- a) Any amendment, addition or alteration to any provision of the existing constitution of society must be approved by two-third majority at the annual or special meeting of the general body and forwarded to the Director of Rural Development Department for permission
 - b) The Rural Development Officer, District Rural Development Officer and Divisional Secretary of the area is entitled to advise every society and its members as to the development activities and rights of the societies
 - c) In event of malpractice or misappropriation of funds of society, an inquiry shall be held by the District Rural Development Officer and on his findings the Director of Rural Development Department may remove the office-bearers and /or the committee members or take any other alternative action.
 - d) In the event of the cancellation of registration of the society the Director of Rural Development Department shall take over all documents of the said society through the Rural Development Officer of the area.
 - e) The provisions of the constitution shall become effective and in force from the date of registration of the said society

CHAPTER 2

REGISTRATION OF THE SOCIETY

After organized a society the duly filled application forms with all supported documents as mentioned below should be submitted to the Director of Rural Development by the Rural Development Officer and District Rural Development Officer for the registration. The Rural Development Officer and District Rural Development Officer should satisfy that the society is functioning well.

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| 01. Application forms for registration of the society. | - 03 copies. |
| 02. List of Names of the society members and their signatures. | - 03 copies. |
| 03. The minutes of the inaugural meeting. | - 03 copies. |
| 04. Name of the Committee members & address | - 03 copies. |
| 05. Acceptable constitution by executive committee. | - 03 copies. |
| 06. Approved village map with boundaries. | - 03 copies. |
| 07. Information forms for registration | - 03 copies. |

The Specimen application form and the Information form are in the annexures.

Annexure - I

The application form to register the Rural Development Society / Women Rural Development Society

1. District:
2. Divisional Secretary's' Division:
3. Name of the Grama Niladhari Division & number :
4. Name of Village:
5. Name of the Rural Development Society / Women Rural Development Society:
6. Number of families in the village:
 - 6.1. The number of families registered in the society:
 - 6.2. Total number of members in the society:
7. The date of inaugurated meeting commenced:
8.
 - 8.1. Name & address of president:
 - 8.2. Name & address of secretary:
 - 8.3. Name & address of treasurer:
9. The assets and funds of the society if any:
 - 9.1. The money on hand of treasurer:
 - 9.2. In the bank:
 - 9.3. Value of the lands & buildings etc:
 - 9.4. Value of the equipment and machineries:

Signature of president

Name:

Date:

Signature of secretary.

Name:

Date:

NB: A copy of the accepted constitution should be annexed with the application.

Annexure - II

Information format for Registration

(This form should be filled by Rural Development Officer)

01. District:
02. D.S. Division:
03. The name & number of Grama Sevaka Division:
04. Name Location of the village/s:
05. Name of the Rural Development Society / Women Rural Development Society to be registered:
06. Official address of Rural Development Society / Women Rural Development Society:
07. Total number of the families in the said area of the society:
08. Number of membership families in the society:
09. Observation made by you at the field visits during the organization of the society:
10. Your view of the representation of the committee members of the society during and after formation of the society:
11. What kind of activities are carried out by the society if any:
12. Your recommendation on the registration of the Society:

I certify that the application submitted with the documents of the above society were checked and found correct and I recommend for registration of the society.

Signature of Rural Development Officer

Designation & Rubber stamp

13. Recommendation of District Rural Development Officer:-
The documents submitted by Rural Development Officer for registration checked by me and found to be correct. I recommend for registration.

Signature of District Rural Development Officer

Designation & Rubber stamp

14. For office use only:
TheRDS / WRDSis here by registered under section no.....
with effect from

Director,
Department of Rural Development,
North East Province.

Designation & Rubber stamp