

## **PGS-NOAN Programme** **Term of Reference for Operation of Local Groups**

PGS-NOAN is a voluntary organic Guarantee programme, being operated by the state chapters under the surveillance of NOAN standards and Certification Committee

NOAN Standards and Certification Committee is the apex policy and decision making body as it concerns Standards and Certification.

The programme intends to create a network of local organic farmer groups having competence of organic certification system which are capable of providing organic guarantee based on PGS-NOAN system through a participatory approach. To make the system transparent and trust worthy there is a provision for appointment of State Chapter representatives to aid administrative duties. These State Chapters shall participate through group formation process, registration, surveillance, supervision and by verification of documents to confirm the organic integrity of the group.

It must be clearly understood that registration of any Local Group by the State Chapters authorized by PGS-NOAN is purely voluntary and do not give any guarantee/ assurance for any financial assistance from the Secretariat or Ministry of Agriculture or any other Institution/ organization associated to the secretariat.

PGS-NOAN shall not be interfering in the autonomic functioning and decisionmaking of the Local Groups (LGs), but have full right to review the decisions of theLGs but has the right to surveillance, monitor,review and random sampling of products for residue testing. In all such cases the report shall be sent to the concerned portal for further actions.

PGS-NOAN programme requires a stipulated fee following the payment chart, but State chapters and Local Groups may agree upon some fee structure to be paid by Local Groups to State Chapters, depending upon the services being offered by the State Chapters

### **Terms of reference for Registered Local Groups under PGS-NOAN Programme**

1. The Local Group on being registered as PGS-NOAN Local Group (hereinafter referred as LG) shall ensure that it has provided a copy of the following documents to the State Chapter/PGS NOAN.
  - a. Application form of LG for registration
  - b. List of farmer members with
    - a copy of individual application form and
    - duly signed PGS-NOAN pledge
  - c. Individual members farm history sheet in template
  - d. Agreement to be entered into with the State Chapter.
2. There is a mandatory requirement of group's endorsement by any other registered PGS- NOAN Group or by State Chapters.
3. At the time of Registration each LG needs to obtain following documents from the State Chapters
  - a. Copy of PGS-NOAN operational manual and Standard
  - b. Copy of all appraisal forms (peer appraisal sheets and LG summary Sheet)
- c. LGs operating manual with a checklists (if any developed the Group or State Chapter)
- d. State Chapters and PGS NOAN shall also help facilitate availability of technical literature on crop management, nutrient management, plant protection or any other such issues as needed by farmers on request.

4. The LG shall make all out efforts to promote organic farming and work towards image building and confidence building among its members and other stakeholders of organic farming and consumers
5. If a LG is having only five members then each member shall be the part of certification team. But if the group is large then each LG need to elect its certification team comprising of five members as Follows:  
Group leader  
Training and meeting coordinator  
Peer review facilitator  
Documentation In-charge  
Public relation and State Chapter Coordinator  
Certification team is elected every year with the post of Group Leader being rotated.
6. All efforts should be made to ensure that each and every member of the group is active participant in peer review process.
7. Capacity building of farmers is an important component of PGS-NOAN Programme each LG shall ensure adequate capacity building measures in consultation with group leaders and State Chapters for total compliance of standards. At least 2 members of each group need to be properly trained by the State Chapters.
8. In cases where LGs do not have access to computer or internet or LGs are unable to upload the data, State Chapters may need to help them in developing their capacities or obtain the entire data in hard copy and upload in the website. In such cases LGs need to provide all information to State Chapters in hard copy on paper.
9. State chapters shall ensure that they participate in LG meetings, LG key training programmes and some peer appraisal visits to assess the strength of the group and to help them improve their implementation processes.
10. Although entire PGS data shall be on-line in the NOAN/PGS website, but each LG shall also ensure that original hard copies of the records such as LG summary sheets, peer appraisal sheets, LGs application with each member history sheet are also maintained in hard copy in separate member files at LG level.
11. LG shall prepare half yearly calendar of activities (such as trainings, capacity building programmes, peer appraisals etc) and intimate all group members and state chapters for effective coordination.
12. LGs shall also prepare annual or half yearly crop calendar before every sowing season with details of activities to be taken and intimate state Chapters in time.
13. As per the requirement each LG shall meet at least six times a year and maintain attendance register and details of meeting proceedings. Each and every member is required to participate in at least half of such meetings. Participation of members in such meetings reflects the commitment of the member to the programme and an important step for endorsement of certification decision by the state chapters and PGS NOAN.
14. To keep on building the competence of the members, LGs need to organize some key field day

trainings. Proceedings, details of such trainings along with attendance is also an important component for endorsement of certification decision state chapters and PGS NOAN.

15. LGs shall provide full access to all the documents, records and information, including their fields and members for surveillance, monitoring and groups during visits by the State chapter or PGS NOAN
16. LGs shall ensure mutual recognition and support among different LGs at regional and national level by studying each other's processes and functioning and by having surveillance in each other's areas.