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DO Z-18015/18/2023-NHM-II (Pt.-I)

Dated 07th April, 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

As you are aware, National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) has been undertaking the process of certification for ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators under two independent core components of the ASHA Certification Programme which include (RMNCHA+N) and expanded package of Services in a tripartite arrangement between the Ministry of Health Family Welfare and National Health systems Resource centre (NHSRC). ASHA certification programme ensures an incentive of Rs 5000 for each component on successful completion of certification.

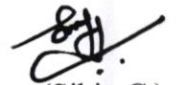
The certification of ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators is intended to strengthen their competencies and enhance their professional credibility, while also assuring the community of the quality of services delivered. Furthermore, it fosters a sense of self-worth, motivation and recognition among ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators.

As per the recent MoU, the cost for evaluation and certification under the ASHA Certification Programme has been revised. States/UTs are required to pay Rs 878 per ASHA/ASHA Facilitator applicable from 26th February 2026 directly to the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) for each registered candidate. Accordingly, funds will be provisioned and released by States/UTs through the PIP process based on the number of ASHAs enrolled for certification. The salient features of the revised strategy are enclosed herewith as Annexure.

The ASHA Certification Programme is of significant importance; however, its implementation in several States/UTs has been slower than expected. Delays in enrolment, training, assessment and certification have hindered programme progress, limiting the professional development of ASHAs and affecting the quality of community-level healthcare services. Hence, I urge all the States/UTs to expedite the process of ASHA certification program and take necessary steps so that all the ASHAs in your State/UT are certified and also to ensure timely payment procedure to NIOS for each registered ASHA/AF.

With regards,

Yours Sincerely


(Sibin C)

Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary/ Secretary -All States/UTs

Copy to: Mission Directors (NHM)-All States/UTs

Salient Features of ASHA -NIOS Certification Framework

Background

The National Health Mission (NHM) was launched to address the healthcare needs of the country. The ASHA programme is a key component of the Community Processes within the NHM framework and is intended to enhance community engagement with the health system. ASHAs are the primary drivers of community-based care and were introduced in the health systems with the objective of bridging the gap between health services and the community by functioning as healthcare facilitators, service providers, and health activists at the community level.

An ASHA is a trained woman health activist selected from the community and accountable to it. The responsibilities of ASHAs are not limited to providing basic healthcare services related to Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, vaccination, nutrition, etc., but also extend to promoting gender equality, addressing social determinants of health, and preparing village/ward health plans.

To enhance the competency and professional credibility of ASHAs, the ASHA Certification programme was initiated in 2014, following approval by the Mission Steering Group in its meeting held on 6 December 2013. The programme was rolled out in 2014 as a tripartite collaborative project by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and the National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC).

Objectives of ASHA Certification

- Enhance the competency and professional credibility of ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators (AFs)
- Promote a sense of self-recognition among ASHAs and AFs
- Encourage higher aspirations.
- Provide assurance of service quality to the community.

Components of Certification

There are two core components of the ASHA Certification Programme, with independent certification under each component:

1. Component I: RMNCHA+N and Communicable Diseases

ASHA undergoes total 28 days training comprising of an induction training of 8 days followed by a 20-day training (covering content of 6–7 modules in four rounds). These trainings must be completed within the first 18 months of joining. This ensures that ASHAs acquire competencies related to reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health, nutrition, and infectious diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis. Upon completion of training, ASHAs become eligible for certification.

This component covers:

- Care during pregnancy and childbirth.
- Neonatal and infant healthcare services

- Childhood and adolescent healthcare services
- Family planning, contraceptive services, and other reproductive healthcare services
- Management of communicable diseases, including National Health Programmes
- Management of common communicable diseases and outpatient care for acute, simple illnesses and minor ailments

2. Component II: Expanded Package of Services under Ayushman Arogya Mandir (AAM)

ASHAs also undergo a 14-day training on the expanded package of services, which includes:

- Screening, prevention, control, and management of non-communicable diseases
- Care for common ophthalmic and ENT (Ear, Nose, and Throat) conditions.
- Basic oral healthcare
- Elderly and palliative healthcare services
- Emergency medical services
- Screening and basic management of mental health conditions

The existing training modalities for ASHAs are currently under revision and will transition into an integrated training mechanism. Until the revised approach is implemented, the current system will continue. A detailed revised strategy will be shared in due course.

Broad-Level Strategy for ASHA Certification

- Relaxation of eligibility criteria**
 - a) ASHAs have the flexibility to choose either component first (Component I or Component II) based on their convenience and choice.
 - b) The minimum qualification requirement has been removed from the portal; only a written and signed self-declaration document has to be uploaded on the portal, confirming the ability to read and write in a preferred language. This will be enough to ensure that she can appear for her certification exams.
- The trained pool of ASHA trainers from NHSRC and States/UTs should be leveraged for rolling out the ASHA Certification programme.
- The certification programme should align with the Ministry's ongoing training and annual refresher training programmes for ASHAs.
- The number of examinations has been increased to four per year for each component, enabling ASHAs to appear at their convenience.
- Existing ASHA trainers may be empanelled as evaluators. Evaluators from neighbouring districts within the same State/UT may be utilised for external evaluation.
- One-time incentives will be provided to ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators who will successfully complete each component under NHM.
- Number of attempts for uncertified ASHAs:
 - a) Two (1+1) attempts for Component I, valid for 3 years from the date of registration
 - b) Three (1+2) attempts for Component II, valid for 3 years from the date of registration
- If ASHA cannot qualify within the permissible attempts, then she has to re-register herself as a fresh candidate. **Full fees will be applicable in such cases.**

9. NIOS will be creating a grievance redressal mechanism, related to the certification process, including those related to the NIOS portal. The portal will track resolution of the grievances.
10. States may enrol ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators in NIOS Open Basic Education (OBE) programmes if an ASHA is not formally educated however intends to appear for vocational, secondary, or senior secondary levels.
11. The cost for evaluation and certification charged by NIOS will be ₹878 per registered ASHA/AF.

Roles and Responsibilities

NIOS

- I. Maintain the ASHA NIOS Portal with appropriate updates/revisions and introduce a correction window for the correction of documents uploaded by ASHAs prior to the closing of the registration.
- II. Prepare and upload relevant FAQs on NIOS portal as a ready reckoner/ knowledge material for ASHAs to refer to before examination.
- III. Maintain a database of training and examination centres provided by States/UTs, in coordination with State NHMs. Attempt to decentralise exam centres to the block level wherever feasible as per the number of ASHAs sitting in the centre. State Governments to support the identification of suitable venues and ensure necessary arrangements for logistics and supervision.
- IV. Provide training to all functionaries of States/UTs about the Online system including the registration, verification and conduct of the examination of ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators
- V. Conduct quarterly examination (Theory and External practical examination of relevant knowledge and skills) for ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators for each component.
- VI. Share the list of certified ASHAs with the States/UTs within 02 weeks of result declaration.
- VII. Conduct/monitor theory and practical examination of relevant knowledge and skills for ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators in consultation with States/UTs for four times in a year and issue both digital and hard copies of certificates to the state within 01 month of result declaration.
- VIII. NIOS to avoid scheduling exams in March-end and April-beginning to align exam calendars with State convenience.
- IX. Reattempts is not permitted to improve score once candidate has passed the ASHA certification examination.
- X. NIOS will develop a dashboard up to block and ASHA level, showing registration status, certified ASHA numbers with names at block, and real-time updates, accessible to States, Districts, and Blocks.
- XI. **No fees will be charged from ASHAs for certificate correction before certificate printing based on Aadhaar details.** In case, any correction is required, on account of lack of verification of credentials by ASHAs/nominated state authority, the cost of re-printing

the certificate @ Rs. 70 per certificate will be borne by the state. However, in case the error has occurred at the end of NIOS, the cost of reprinting will be borne by NIOS.

XII. ASHAs may choose the order of appearance in either component as per their convenience.

States/UTs (ASHA Resource Centre / Community Processes Team under NHM)

I. Set yearly targets for the number of ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators to be certified.

II. Provide list of trainers for empanelment as per the outlined eligibility criteria.

III. Share the list of identified State/UT training centres at any level (State, District, and block level) for the ASHAs/AFs with NIOS for maintaining a database.

IV. Identification of ASHAs/ASHA Facilitator's any supervisor including Community Health Officer, Medical Officer, Block Community Mobiliser in her service area for verification of the online registration/enrolment of the ASHA/AFs (roles defined later in the document).

V. Facilitate online self-registration/self-enrolment in the programme by ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators on NIOS ASHA portal asha.nios.ac.in.

VI. Undertake training of ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators ensuring a internal assessment based on training modules. The scores of the assessments must be uploaded on NIOS portal.

VII. List ASHAs and AFs who are not formally educated and have certificates. Facilitate their educational/ upgradation in collaboration with NIOS.

VIII. Regularly monitor the programme.

Timeline for Certification of ASHAs and AFs

Duration of the Programme- There is no restriction on ASHA registration; the portal will remain open throughout the year, allowing ASHAs to register at their convenience. However, examinations will be conducted four times a year as per the NIOS schedule, and ASHAs may choose to appear for the exam at their convenience. Each ASHA will be allowed a maximum of two attempts for Component I and three attempts for Component II.

Calendar of Activities -Yearly

1. **Examination Centre& External practical Examination-** The Examination Centre & External practical examination will be conducted at the Block/ District level Training Centre, preferably at block level.

2. **Question Paper (QP)-** The QP of the final examination will be uploaded on the NIOS ASHA portal for Examination center to download and take print out. In addition to the online availability of the theory question paper on the NIOS Portal, the hard copies of the question papers to the candidates, in exigencies, can be made available from the nearby training Centre or by the NIOS, Regional Centre.

Online Registration for ASHA Trainers, ASHA, and ASHA Facilitators

The process of online registration will be undertaken for ASHA Trainers, ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators.

1. Registration of ASHA Trainers

The existing ASHA trainers (at any level) trained by NHSRC/ State in cascade model, would be eligible as **resources for ASHA certification** to be done by NIOS. NHSRC and States/UTs will ensure, that every trainer who engages in ASHA Certification programme is eligible, for empanelment as per norms decided by NHSRC.

The co-opted empanelled trainers can be provided remuneration by the State/UTs with support of NHM linked to specified output in the programme-training and number of candidates certified based on registration details. Multiple Trainers can be engaged in these processes.

II. Registration of ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators

1. ASHAs/AFs will be responsible for self-online registration/enrolment in the programme on the portal with the help of State NHM team.
2. ASHA/AFs must provide a digitally secure ABHA ID for online registration.

III. Verification of Registration of ASHA Trainers, ASHA, and ASHA Facilitators

1. The Registration, verification and empanelment of the ASHA trainers can be undertaken by NIOS.
2. The Verification of the enrolment/registration of the ASHAs/ASHA Facilitators shall be done by a supervisor like, Community Health Officer, Medical Officer, Block Community Mobiliser, available in her service area.
3. Once the form is verified, an acknowledgement form will be generated with Reference No. or Registration ID. The candidate will download the acknowledgement slip/ identity card/enrolment number.
4. The confirmed list of registered ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators will be available to the State/UT- NHM/NIOS Regional Centre. This list can be used for information and monitoring.

IV. Verification by Supervisors (ASHAs/ASHA Facilitator's any supervisor including Community Health Officer, Medical Officer, Block Community Mobiliser)

1. There will be provision of viewing the confirmed and verified list of candidates by the supervisors engaged in this process. The list of registered ASHAs and AFs can be downloaded.
2. After successful registration of candidates for a particular cycle, the supervisor is responsible to confirm the training schedule on the portal.
3. Apart from the verification and confirmation process, the supervisors will also have the access of the data of those who have completed the training and those ASHAs and AFs who have been registered for the examination.
4. The State shall ensure that Internal Assessment marks of participating ASHAs are uploaded/ shared to NIOS on a quarterly basis, in close coordination and with the support of the Regional NIOS Office.
5. NIOS will be responsible for all processes related to both practical and theory examinations, including payment of fees for external evaluators/trainers, as well as all logistical requirements for conducting the examinations for ASHAs/ AF.

6. NIOS will outline the details of the online processes of the programme at each step.

V. State Coordinator/ NIOS RC level State consultant

Similar provision will be made on the portal for the States/UTs Coordinator and NIOS Regional Centre ASHA State Consultant for monitoring the certification process.