

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR UPLIFTMENT OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR

As per Census 2011, Sixty five percent (65 per cent) of the total female workers in India are engaged in agriculture. Of the total cultivators (118.7 million), 30.3 per cent are female. Out of 144.3 million agricultural labourers 42.6 per cent are women. In 2001, female agricultural labourers were 21 per cent which increased to 23 per cent in 2011.

The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare implements various programmes of farmers including women in agriculture sector. As per directives for the Women Component Plan, the state governments have been asked to ensure flow of funds to the tune of 30 per cent for the benefit of women farmers.

The guidelines of Centrally Sponsored Scheme/Missions such as Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms under Sub-Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE), National Food Security Mission, National Mission on Oil Seed and Oil Palm and National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, Sub-Mission for Seed & Planting Material, Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) stipulate that States and other Implementing Agencies are required to earmark at least 30 per cent expenditure on Women Farmers.

The primary objective of “*Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)*” implemented by Ministry of Rural Development is to empower women in agriculture by making systematic investments to enhance their participation and productivity, as also create and sustain agriculture based livelihoods of rural women. Under the MKSP, projects are conceived in such a manner that the skill base of the women in agriculture is enhanced to enable them to pursue their livelihoods on a sustainable basis.

The measures taken by the Government for upliftment of women in the agriculture sector include:



1. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme **Support to States Extension Programme for Extension Reforms**, mainstreaming gender concerns in agriculture is being addressed by ensuring utilization of minimum 30% of resources on programmes and activities for women farmers and women extension functionaries. In order to encourage women farmers' participation in planning and decision making process, their representation in Farmers' Advisory Committee at block, district and state level has been provided under the Scheme's guidelines.
2. Under **Sub Mission on Seed and Planting Material (SMSP)**, the training is provided under the components of the Scheme Seed Village Programme and Quality Control Arrangement of Seeds in which women farmers are equally benefitted. State governments are also advised to allocate adequate funds to women farmers.
3. Under the **National Food Security Mission (NFSM)** implemented in 28 states, 30 per cent of allocation of fund is being earmark for women farmer. There is also an intervention under NFSM providing cropping system based training to farmers including SC, ST and women farmers to create awareness on improved technology for increasing production and productivity of crops. State

- governments are implementing the NFSM as per the provisions of the guideline.
4. Under the **National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP)**, 30% of budgetary allocation is being earmarked for women beneficiaries/farmers. Concerned implementing agencies will be responsible for monitoring implementation of these components i.e. allocation of resources for SC/ST/Women beneficiaries and maintenance of database for the same.
 5. Under the **Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)**, 31 drudgery reducing technologies for women in agriculture developed by ICAR are promoted through training, demonstration and financial assistance. Women beneficiaries are also provided 10 per cent additional financial assistance for purchase of various agricultural machines and equipments. Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institutes conducts training on Agricultural Mechanization for women farmers on regular basis and in the year, 2014-15, 936 women farmers were trained.
 6. Under the **National Horticulture Mission**, women are organized into Self Help Groups and farm inputs and technological & extension supports are provided to make women self-reliant.
 7. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established a network of 645 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in the country aiming at assessment and demonstration of technologies/products and its dissemination through number of extension programmes including training of farmers to update their knowledge and skill. These training programmes are conducted by KVKs on improved technologies related to agriculture and allied fields and have benefited the farmers in terms of increased crop production and improved farm income. During 2015-16, as many as 205 women specific income generation technologies related to technological empowerment of rural women were assessed in 394 locations covering 2917 trials under the thematic areas, namely Drudgery Reduction, Farm Mechanization, Health and Nutrition, Processing and Value Addition, Production and Management, Energy Conservation, Small Scale Income Generation, and Storage Techniques. The major enterprises included mushroom, sericulture, vermin compost production, nutritional gardens etc. Nearly 339700 farm women were trained in the crop production training programmes.
 8. ICAR- Central Institute for Women in Agriculture (ICAR-CIWA) has been in the forefront undertaking research on issues affecting women in agriculture. It has focused on participatory action research in different technology based theme areas involving rural women to test suitability of technologies for women and suggest their refinement. The Institute is also working to catalyse and facilitate R & D institutions to bring in farm women perspectives in their programmes. For gender mainstreaming and empowering women in agriculture, various projects are being implemented to address issues related to women in agriculture in the areas of integrated farming system, IPM, drudgery, livestock and fisheries, extension methodologies and gender indices etc. Drudgery faced by farm women in various agricultural operations including household are being addressed with quantifiable data on the required parameters and designing/ refining women friendly farm tools & equipment. It is also working on gender sensitive approaches and methodologies to enhance access of women to critical resources, programmes and services which are critical for women's empowerment in agriculture. Since women in agriculture is a new area of research, capacity building of all the stakeholders are being organized through sensitization programmes for development functionaries, research scientists/ managers, teachers and KVKs scientists/ SMS who are directly or indirectly associated with farm women empowerment by ICAR-CIWA at different places in the country.

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