

## **Womens Empowerment in Rural India - On Overview**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Women empowerment in rural areas has been pointed out as an indispensable condition to reduce poverty in developing country like India. Although women make up half of the Indian population, their participation in various activities is not the same as men even today. Without the participation of women in the development process, society as a whole cannot be said to develop sufficiently. In recent decades the topic of women empowerment in rural areas has become acute, especially, in developing countries like India. Rural women are key agents for achieving the sustainable development of India. This paper attempts to discuss the women empowerment in rural India. This paper reveals facts about various programmed conducted by the Government of India to improve the women empowerment

**Key Words :** Women empowerment, Rural women problems, MGNREGA, NGOs

### **INTRODUCTION**

Empowerment of women that will have lasting impacts must involve consciousness raising before the social construction of gender, which subordinates women in the family, class, caste, religion, or society, can be changed. The economic empowerment approach has relied on improving women's control over economic resources and strengthening women's economic security. The results also suggest that policies to rise women's age at marriage enhance their educations and open greater employment opportunities will also help to empower them, at least in some respects. Our goal is to cause policy, institutional and individual change that will improve the lives of women and girls everywhere.

India has also ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favor of women. Women's empowerment is an important agenda in the development efforts. There has been significant shift in approach of the district administration towards

the development of women, especially the poor and the illiterate. When you train a woman, you help the entire family, the village and the nation.

India is a country which attained independence in 1947, but the rural-urban divide and

The rich-poor divide are still plaguing India. 68.84 per cent of the Indian population lives in villages. There are 6, 40,867 villages in India. According to 2011 census, the populations of rural

Women who are literate are 58.8 per cent (Census, 2011) According to the "2007 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects" by the United Nations, India would continue to have the largest rural population in the world until 2050. There are several issues which are creating difficulties in the lives of Indians, like rising crimes against women, increasing poverty, corruption, nepotism, lack of transparency in the official functioning, bureaucratic hassles, criminalization of politics, criminal-politician-bureaucratic entente etc. However, the common Indian citizen is striving to get two ends meet.

Indian rural life is difficult to comprehend in the realities. On other hand small minority of people in large state have got very good rural farmer is profited from

information technology Kristi in some old years in India country, their lives and life change with difficult. A low landlord's majority of cannot improving sustainable economies condition, they think oppression doing on the women and lower caste people, higher castes people and government people or servant support a good life for his life. Private sector rules are low strong according as comparison government rules, they ready preserve own power has on every step punishment. For example today government health care scheme is all over of rural family in India is a free government service in government hospital, In original way we see that the first stage of primary health care scheme is totally failed. A lot of charitable trust and most non-governmental organizations doing very good character, usually from government grants and non Indian people donations

### **Education of women:**

Education to women is the most powerful instrument of changing their position the society. Education also brings about reduction in inequalities and also acts as a means to improve their status within the family. In order to encourage education of women at all levels and to dilute gender bias in the provision and acquaintance of education, schools, colleges and even universities were established exclusively for women in the State. To bring more girl children, especially from marginalized BPL families, into the main stream of education, Government has been providing a package of concessions in the form of free supply of books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for hostilities, mid-day meals, scholarships, free by-cycles and so on. As a result women's literacy rate has grown over the three decades and the growth of female literacy has in fact been higher than that of male literacy rate.

### **Health and well-being:**

Health and well-being is a concept related to the substantial differences between women and men in their access to sufficient nutrition, healthcare and reproductive facilities, and to issues of fundamental safety and integrity of person. According to the World Health Organization, 585,000 women die every year, over 1,600 every day, from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. The complexity of the social and cultural issues, combined with the stigma and fear of disclosure lead to a situation where only a small proportion of the crimes of sexual assault, child abuse, wife battering and gun related

violence are ever reported, making accurate data extremely difficult to obtain.

### **Women development programmes:**

Against the background of the patriarchal system of society, the women need special attention to ensure their development and participation in the decision making process at home, in the community and governance.

The various activities planned and carried out are:

- Formation and Training of Self Help Groups
- Group Development
- Capacity Building
- Income Generation Activities
- Credit and Savings Mobilization
- Establishment of linkages

These activities had made impressive impacts in empowering women and improving their economic and social status in their families and communities. The thrust of the programmed is organizing women and federating them at different level to enhance their social status. Due to the entrepreneur development skills promoted, the women took up various income generating activities as individuals and as a group such as mat weaving, dairy farms, palm crystal candy making, flour rice, fancy shops, petty shops, soap manufacturing, textile business and paper cup.

The federation of women SHGs called 'Sangamon' was formed by the members themselves based on their own experience and the exposure they received. It decided to start a supermarket and a building was constructed. As a share of Rs. 10,000 was collected from each SHGs by the federation. All the SHG members buy the provisionary items from their own Sangamon store and steps are taken to distribute the items at their door steps through vans. The federation has assumed maximum responsibilities and there is ample scope that soon it will become fully self sustaining entity.

### **Tejaswini rural women's empowerment programmed:**

Tejaswini means radiance or one who gives light, and reflects the objective of the project in moving women to a higher level through their collective efforts and mutual assistance. This would up-scale and further develops the concepts tested in the Maharashtra Rural Credit Programmed, which IFAD supported from 1994 to 2002.

### **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment**

**Guarantee Act- A wage employment scheme:**

NREGA is the most significant act in the history of Indian polity in many ways like Grass -root level participation of every citizen and beneficiary through democratic process, multilayered social audit and transparency mechanism by involvement of civil society, comprehensive planning at village level towards sustainable and equitable development etc. Important salient feature of the Act is to improve the quality of life of rural households who are vulnerable to outmigration in search of daily wage employment by channelizing the wage workforce towards developmental activities at the village level itself (IAMR, 2009) It is a powerful instrument for ensuring inclusive growth in rural India through its impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic empowerment. The Act was notified in 200 districts in the first phase with effect from February 2nd 2006 and then extended to an additional 130 districts in the financial year 2007-2008 (113 districts were notified with effect from April 1st 2007 and 17 districts in Uttar Pradesh (UP) were notified with effect from May 15th 2007). The remaining districts have been notified under MGNREGA with effect from April 1, 2008. In October 2009 the name of the scheme was changed to MGNREGA.

MGNREGA covers the entire country with the exception of districts that have a hundred percent urban population. The MGNREGA has given rise to the largest employment programmed in human history and is unlike any other wage employment programmed in its scale, architecture and thrust. Its bottom-up, people - cantered, demand-driven, self-selecting, rights-based design is distinct and unprecedented. It provides a legal guarantee for wage employment. It is a demand driven programmed where provision of work is triggered by the demand for work by wage seekers.

There are legal provisions for allowances and compensation both in cases of failure to provide work on demand and delays in payment of wages for work undertaken. The MGNREGA overcomes problems of targeting through its self-targeting mechanism of beneficiary selection, that is, a large percentage of poorest of the poor and marginalized seek employment under the Scheme. The Act incentivizes States to provide employment, as 100 per cent of the unskilled labor cost and 75% of the material cost of the programmed is borne by the Centre. Goals of MGNREGS are social protection for the most vulnerable people living in rural India,

livelihood security for the poor through creation of durable assets, improved water security, soil conservation and higher land productivity, drought-proofing and flood management in rural India empowerment of the socially disadvantaged, especially women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, through the processes of a rights-based legislation, strengthening decentralized, participatory planning through convergence of various anti-poverty and livelihoods initiatives, deepening democracy at the grass-roots by strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions and effecting greater transparency and accountability in governance.

Chimayo Rural Training Center (CRTC for short) is a successful rural NGO in India that has received accolades for its success in empowering the women of the region and drawing them out of the cycle of dependency. CRTC is located in an impoverished village of Sithbari, in Himachal Pradesh, nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas. The vast majority of the population is made up of landless poor and unskilled people who have few opportunities for full-time employment. Villagers work the land, owned by a handful of upper caste families. As agricultural activity is seasonal and ceases in the winter months the employees are underemployed. Hence many of them eke out a living through subsistence farming around their homes and are involved in local trade that is generally not profitable. They belong to many of the lower castes and tribes that are categorized by the Indian Government as 'Other Backward Classes' (OBC).

For effective training Programmed, following points should be considered :

- i) Extension agencies should pursue the family approach to training
- ii) Training should be organized at appropriate time specially the pre- seasonal training.
- iii) There should be proper followed-up of the programmers and there should be synchronization in time between knowledge and skill transfer and the supply credit and other inputs needed to apply the knowledge.
- iv) During training, the training institute should identify the active participants and intensive training should be imparted to them so that they can be used as a Opera-extension workers for dissemination of technical information.

**Empowerment of women:**

Empowerment is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered concept. Women's empowerment is a

process in which women gain greater share of control over resources - material, human and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources like money - and access to money and control over decision-making in the home, community, society and nation, and to gain 'power'.

According to the Country Report of Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power". The process by which people, organizations or groups who are powerless a) become aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context, b) develop the skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives and c) exercise this control without infringing on the rights of others and d) support the empowerment of others in the community.

National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) a Government of India organization has Stated that in 2009-10 and 2011-12, women's employment has taken an alarming dip in rural areas in the past two years. In jobs that are done for 'the major part of the year', a staggering 9.1 Million jobs were lost by rural women. This is a reflection of the fact that women are no longer Getting longer term and better paying jobs, and so are forced to take up short term transient work.

### **Panchayati Raj Institutions:**

The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Indian Constitution have served as a breakthrough towards ensuring equal access and increased participation in political power structure for women. The PRIs will play a central role in the process of enhancing women's participation in public life. The PRIs and the local self Governments will be actively involved in the implementation and execution of the National Policy for Women at the grassroots level.

### **Conclusion:**

To make the scheme successful in empowering rural women, it is very necessary that they should participate

in large numbers in the Gram Sabah and voice their preferences and concerns regarding the implementation of government schemes, including, MGNREGS. The opportunity of right to livelihood should be properly made use of Indian Constitution had not given the right to work as a justifiable right. But, it was in 2005 that the Indian Parliament passed the law on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to provide the right to work to Indian citizens of rural areas. Rural Indian women are stepping out of their private space and making a contribution in building infrastructure in the village, other than empowering themselves. The Government of India has provided an opportunity to rural women to live with dignity and honor and equal footing with the rural man. Earlier, the contribution of the rural women was invisible to the people with patriarchal mindsets. Otherwise, If implemented successfully, all the programmed is not succeed but some programmed are a role model for all developing countries.

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