

Gender Perspective in Agriculture A separate chapter in the Annual Report of the DAC&FW. A separate chapter on “Gender Perspective in Agriculture” is being included in the Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture Cooperation & Farmers Welfare for the last 6 years in pursuance to the directives from Ministry of Finance.

3.GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN AGRICULTURE (2017-18)

“Gender Mainstreaming’ is one of the important pillars of the National Policy for Farmers’ formulated in 2007. In line with the Policy directives, it is mandated to take appropriate structural, functional & institutional measures to empower women in agriculture and allied sectors by building their capacities and improving their access to inputs, technology and other farming resources. Mainstreaming of gender concerns is being addressed by (i) earmarking 30% of funds for women under various major schemes/programmes and development interventions; (ii) taking pro-women initiatives to help women derive the benefits of beneficiary-oriented components of various programmes/ schemes and missions. Focus is also being given on formation of women Self Help Groups (SHGs), capacity building interventions, linking them to micro credit, enhancing their access to information and ensuring their representation in decision-making bodies at various levels.

The National Gender Resource Centre in Agriculture (NGRCA) set up in the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and supported under the Central Sector Component of Sub-Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE) acts as a focal point for convergence of all gender related activities & issues in agriculture & allied sectors within and outside the Department. The Centre is also contributing towards adding gender dimension to agriculture policies /programmes and rendering advocacy / advisory services to the States/ UTs to internalize gender specific interventions in policies/ programmes of agriculture sector.

Besides undertaking and supporting training, research and advocacy to mainstreaming gender issues in agriculture and natural resource management, NGRCA aims at forging effective functional linkages with other related departments, agencies and institutions & is mandated to ensure that the policies and programmes in agriculture are fully engendered & reflect the national commitment to empowerment of women.

Gender Budgeting Cell (GBC] has been constituted in the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare for looking into the budgetary commitments of various schemes of DAC & FW, bringing gender concerns on to the centre stage in all aspects of public expenditure and policy and ensuring a proportionate flow of the public expenditure benefiting women farmers. Nodal officers/ Gender Coordinators in various Divisions have been sensitized about the

concept of gender budgeting. Formats of all the beneficiary oriented schemes of the Ministry are being revised to generate gender disaggregated data.

Current Initiatives of NGRCA

Being a Nodal Centre for women in agriculture in DAC&FW, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, the centre is actively involved in the following activities:

1. Macro-Micro Level & Action Research Studies:

- Adoption of Gender Friendly Tools by Women Farmers and its impact on their lives
- Schemes for Improving Women Farmers' Access to Extension Services & Gender Mainstreaming in Agriculture.
- "Kisan Credit Card & Issues Related to Credit Availability to Women: Role of Financial Institutions in Empowering Women Farmers
- Gender Based Impact Analysis of ATMA Programme.

2. **Publication:**

- Published:
 - ✓ Compendium on Gender Friendly Tools/Equipments (Bi-lingual)
 - ✓ Farm Women Friendly Handbook (Both in English & Hindi)
- **Initiated:**
 - ✓ 51 Success Stories of women farmers
 - ✓ Compendium on Women Agri-preneurs

3. Published literature has been circulated to all State Agriculture Department, ATMAs, KVKs, SAUs, ICAR Institutes for onward sharing with the women beneficiaries in their vernacular language.
4. Preparation of separate chapter on Gender Prescriptive in Agriculture for the Annual Report and Gender Related Write-up for the Outcome Budget of DAC&FW, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
5. Delivery of Gender Sensitization Module/ Capsule Module on Gender Learning to the Extension functionaries at all levels viz. Senior, Middle & Cutting edge level through MANAGE. EEIs & SAMETIs & Maintenance of Gender Disaggregated Data. The Capsule Module on Gender Learning was delivered through 260 Trg. Programme conducted by MANAGE, Extension Education Institutes (EEIs) and State Institutes for Management of Agricultural Extension Training (SMAETIs) with participation of 7441 male and 2066 Female participants.
6. Advisory issued to the States for preparation of specific guidelines for wasteland development and its distribution to land less farm-women/women farmers, Women SHG for cultivating/livelihood purpose on long-term lease basis.

7. Developed Collaborative Project with the ICAR Institutes for empowerment of women in agriculture & allied sectors. These projects shall be submitted for approval of Competent Authority after modification, if any required.
8. Periodic Updation of the Dashboard pertaining to the Empowerment of Women.
9. Collation of special provisions and package of assistance available for women under various on-going scheme/missions/sub-missions of DAC&FW, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and even those of other Ministries/Departments.
10. Reviewed Reporting format of various on-going schemes of DAC&FW viz. NFSM, SMPP, SMAM, SMSP, MIDH & NMOOP from gender lens.

Mainstreaming efforts of various Divisions of DAC & FW:

The important mainstreaming and gender budgeting efforts within various subject matter divisions are briefly given hereunder:

(A) Horticulture

Under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), an umbrella scheme on horticulture subsuming ongoing schemes on Horticulture i.e. National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Horticulture Mission for North East & Himalayan States (HMNEH), Central Sector Schemes of National Horticulture Board, Coconut Development Board (CDB) and Central Institute for Horticulture, Nagaland.

The above mentioned schemes of Horticulture Divisions are area/project based and are targeted to benefit the farmers specifically small and marginal farmers. The MIDH aims at promoting holistic growth of the horticulture sector through area based regionally differentiated strategies. Keeping in view the overall social objectives and as per directives, all the implementing agencies i.e. State Horticulture Missions and National Level Agencies have been directed to ensure that at least 30% of the budget allocation is earmarked for women beneficiaries while giving subsidies as well as for imparting training for skills development to women farmers for growing horticulture crops and post harvest management.

During the current financial year 2017-18, funds to the tune of Rs. 2329.13 Crore have been earmarked for implementation of schemes under MIDH. Out of this, a total of Rs. 1159.07 crore has been released till 7th November, 2017 to the MIDH implementing agencies.

Horticulture Division is making efforts to stipulate in each and every administrative approval to provide for a pro-women allocation of at least 30% and the implementing agencies have been asked to ensure that the said funds are given in women beneficiaries such as women farmers, women Self Help Groups, women entrepreneurs etc, to encourage and to obtain the benefits of schemes under the Mission as far as possible. Further, Operational Guidelines of MIDH also provides

more subsidy/assistance to women farmers, beneficiaries as compared to general category farmers.

(B) Agriculture Extension

- The centrally Sponsored Scheme “Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms (ATMA) implemented since 2005 is now under implementation in 676 districts of 29 States and UTs of the country. The scheme promotes decentralized farmer-driven and farmer-accountable extension system through an institutional arrangement for technology dissemination in the form of an Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) at district level. Under the scheme grants-in-aid is released to states governments with an objective to support their efforts of revitalization of the extension system and making available the latest agricultural technologies in different thematic areas to increase agricultural production through extension activities viz. Farmers Training, Demonstrations, Exposure Visits, Kisan Mela, Mobilization of Farmers Groups and Setting up of Farm Schools. Through these activities, latest agriculture technologies are disseminated to farmers of the country. The funds under the scheme are being released to the state governments on the basis of State Extension Work Plan (SEWP) formulated & submitted by them. As per provision of the Operational Guidelines of Modified ATMA Scheme, 2014:-
 - At least 30% scheme beneficiaries should be women farmers/ farm women;
 - Minimum 30% of resources meant for programmes and activities are required to be allocated to women farmers and women extension functionaries with specific documentation of expenditure and performance for women being maintained;
 - Women farmers are to be involved in different decision making bodies at district and block level such as Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) Governing Board and ATMA Management Committee at district level;
 - Women are represented in Farmers Advisory Committees (FACs) set up at block/ district and state level;
 - Women are represented in Farmers Advisory Committees (FACs) set up at block/ district and state level;
 - More women are involved as ‘Farmer Friends’ under the newly introduced mechanism for extension delivery below the block level through a ‘Farmer Friend’;
 - Farm Women’s Food and nutritional Security Groups (FIGs) @ at least 2 per block to be formed annually for ensuring household food and nutritional security providing assistance of Rs. 10,000/ per group.

- ATMA programme provides that minimum 30% resources are to be utilized for women farmers and at least 30% scheme beneficiaries should be women farmers/farm women. To improve participation of women in planning & decision making process, the scheme provides for representation and active involvement of women at various decision making platforms viz. ATMA-Governing Body and ATMA-Management Committee at district level & Farmer Advisory Committees (FACs) at Block, District and State level. Besides, scheme provides for enhanced involvement of women as 'Farmer Friend' in a mechanism promoted under the scheme for Farmer-to-Farmer extension. Farm Women's Food and nutritional Security Groups (FIGs) @ at least 2 per block are to be formed annually for ensuring household food and nutritional security providing assistance of Rs.10,000/ per group.
- Inclusion of one 'Gender Coordinator' in every State in the team of committed extension personnel being supported under the Scheme. The role of Gender Coordinator is to ensure flow of support viz. training/ capacity building and extension support as per the specific requirements of women farmers through a strategy suited to their needs.
- Since inception of the Scheme in 2005-06, total 10102098 farm women (24.14% of the total benefited farmers) have participated in farmer oriented activities like Exposure Visits, Training, Demonstrations & Kisan Melas including 347628 women farmers benefited during 2017-18 (up to 31st October, 2017). During FY 2017-18, Rs. 19500/- lakhs was allocated and earmarked for women, out of which Rs. 9513.33 lakhs has been utilised under the scheme for women beneficiaries (as on 31.10.2017).

The Central Sector Scheme "Establishment of Agri-Clinics & Agri-Business Centres (ACABC)" was implemented since April, 2002 with the aim to supplement the efforts of public extension, support agricultural development and create gainful self-employment opportunities to unemployed youths (including women) with qualification in agriculture and allied sectors.

The scheme promotes involvement of agripreneurs (including women) under trained the ACABC scheme in providing advisory and extension services to the farmers in agriculture and allied areas. The agripreneurs trained under ACABC scheme are actively engaged in providing advisory and extension services to the farmers on various technologies.

The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad is the implementing agency for training component under the scheme through a network of identified Nodal Training Institutes (NTIs) in various States and

NABARD is implementing the subsidy component on behalf of Government of India and is monitoring credit support to agripreneurs through commercial banks.

Under ACABC scheme, the training is imparted to unemployed candidates who possess degree/ diploma in agriculture and allied subjects, intermediate in agriculture and science graduates with PG in agri related courses through selected Nodal Training Institutes (NTIs) in various parts of the country. The NTIs also provide hand-holding to the trained candidates for establishment of agri-ventures in agriculture and allied areas and facilitates in providing loan assistance from banks and subsidy support from NABARD.

There is a provision of credit linked back-ended upfront composite subsidy on the bank loan availed by trained candidates under the Scheme. The subsidy is 44% in respect of women, SC/ST and all categories of candidates from North-Eastern and Hill States and 36% in respect of other categories. The subsidy is admissible for loans upto Rs.20 lakh in case of individual and Rs.100 lakh in case of Group Projects (for ventures set up by a group of 5 trained candidates).

During the current year 88 candidates were trained and 09 have established their ventures. Since inception of the scheme, 54531 candidates have been trained and 23501 agri-ventures have been established in the country till 30.09.2017. Out of these 4091 and 1333 are women candidates and entrepreneurs. These ventures are acting as active supplementary institutions for Government Extension mechanism in the states. Now the benefits of MUDRA Loan Scheme have also been included for venture establishment under the Scheme.

Extension Education Institutes: To provide training and HRD support to the extension functionaries across the Country, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare had established four EEIs in four different Regions of the country namely EEI, Nilokheri (Haryana), EEI, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), EEI, Anand (Gujarat) and EEI, Jorhat (Assam) to address the needs of agricultural extension development.

During 2016-17, the Extension Education Institutes (EEIs) conducted 179 training courses with 4099 field extension functionaries including 948 women extension functionaries whereas during 2017-18 (till 15.11.2017), the EEIs conducted 100 training courses with 2391 field extension functionaries including 521 women extension functionaries working in agriculture & allied departments.

Model Training Courses

During 2016-17, 59 Model Training Courses in the thrust areas of agriculture & allied sectors were conducted through specialized National Training Institutes with 1208 field extension functionaries including 181 women extension functionaries working in agriculture & allied departments of States/UTs, whereas during 2017-18

(till 15.11.2017), 49 Model Training Courses have been conducted with 1078 field extension functionaries including 161 women extension functionaries.

Diploma in Agril. Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI)

During 2016-17, 110 batches of DAESI programme were conducted to provide certification to 4463 Input Dealers including 27 women candidates, whereas during 2017-17 (till 15.11.2017), 59 programmes have been conducted with 2197 Input Dealers including 53 women candidates.

(C) Crops

The scheme 'National Food Security Mission (NFSM)' is being implemented in 29 states in the country for increasing the production and productivity of food grains. Besides, Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI) is also under implementation in 7 eastern states of the country of those districts only in which neither NFSM-Rice, nor NFSM-Wheat are under implementation in the covered states. While issuing the administrative approval states are advised to allocate the funds for general, Special Component plan (SCP) for Scheduled Castes and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) for Scheduled Tribes as per their proportion in the state population. Besides, at least 335 of funds will be earmarked for small and marginal farmers. At least 30% of funds under NFSM and 33% under BGREI will be made for women farmers.

(D) Agricultural Marketing

In order to provide single window approach and user & investment friendly atmosphere, all the ongoing six Plan Schemes implemented during the XI Plan period have been put under one umbrella "Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM). It aims to (i) promote agri-marketing through creation of marketing and agribusiness infrastructure including storage, (ii) incentivize agri-market reforms, (iii) provide market linkages to farmers, (iv) provide access to agri-market information and (v) support quality certification of agriculture commodities. ISAM scheme is having five components, namely: (i) Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI), the objective of this component is to create market infrastructure including Storage Infrastructure and Integrated Value Chain Projects (IVC) [the schemes of Grameen Bhandaran Yojana (GBY) and Development/ Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization (AMIGS) has been merged as AMI] (ii) Marketing Research and Information Network (MRIN) (iii) Strengthening of Agmark Grading Facilities (SAGF), (iv) Agri-Business Development (ABD) through Venture Capital Assistance (VCA) and Project Development Facility (PDF) and (v) Training, Research and Consultancy through Choudhary Charan Singh National Institute of Agriculture Marketing (NIAM).

Under Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) component, Women are eligible for subsidy @ 33.33% as against 25% for others.

(E) Mechanization and Technology

To recognizing the need to mechanize the marginal and small farmers, and for inclusive growth of Farm mechanization Sector in the country a Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) was launched in the year 2014-15 with the following objectives:

- Increasing the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to the regions where availability of farm power is low;
- Promoting Custom Hiring Centres' to offset the adverse economies of scale arising due to small land holding and high cost of individual ownership;
- Creating hubs for hi-tech & high value farm equipments;
- Creating awareness among stakeholders through demonstration and capacity building activities;
- Ensuring performance testing and certification at designated testing centers located all over the country.

The SMAM provides a suitable platform for converging all activities for inclusive growth of agricultural mechanization by providing a 'single window' approach for implementation with a special focus on women farmers with the following provisions:

- State Governments have been directed to earmark 30 per cent of total funds allocated under allocated under SMAM for women beneficiaries.
- 10% more assistance for women beneficiary to procure Agricultural Machinery, implements and equipment including PHT under component 2 and 3.
- In order to reduce the drudgery and increasing efficiency in farm operations, number of agricultural implements and hand tools suitable for farm women has been developed by Research & Development organizations under ICAR. The list of gender friendly equipment has been sent to all States/UTs for popularizing them through various schemes of Government.

Gender Friendly Equipment for Women: Under the component 1 of SMAM, Agricultural Mechanization through Training, Testing, and Demonstration, a total 1512 women were trained during the current Financial Year 2017-18 (till October 2017). A list of about 30 identified gender-friendly tools and equipment developed by the Research and Development Organization for use in different farm operations has already been sent to all States and UTs for popularizing them.

(F) Seeds

Sub-Mission for Seeds and Planting Material (SMSP) is under implementation w.e.f. 01.04.2014 with the view to develop/strengthen seed sector and to enhance production and multiplication of high yielding certified/ quality seeds of all agricultural crops and making it available to the farmers at affordable prices and also

place an effective system for protection of plant varieties, rights of farmers and plant breeders to encourage development of new varieties of plants.

Financial assistance/ subsidy benefits are equally available/ open to all the farmers including that of women farmers. Implementing States/UTs/ agencies have been requested to allocate sufficient funds and ensure participation of women farmers.

(G) Cooperation

NCUI implements cooperative Education Programmes through its 44 cooperative education field projects while NCCT provides training to cooperatives through its 5 RICMs, 14 ICMs and one National level institute ie. VAMNICOM. Besides the above, stress is given to women development activities with the overall objective of bringing women in to the cooperative fold from grass root levels by informal approach and to revitalize and develop women participation in group activities and to improve the socio-economic conditions of women of selected blocks. The Cooperative Education Programme for women is being implemented by National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) through the State Cooperative Unions in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. During the year 2016-17 as many as 722 women were imparted education under various classes in 21 events. NCUI is now running four exclusive women development projects located at Shimoga (Karnataka), Aska (Odisha), West Imphal (Manipur) and Bhopal (M.P.), under the Special Scheme of Intensification of Cooperative Education in cooperatively under-developed states (UDS). Each field project has got a special women development component. Under this, women are organized into self-help groups . During the year 2016-17, 105 self help groups with membership of 1040 women were formed by the lady mobilizers of the cooperative education field projects. Through various income generating activities, 3252 women were benefitted under this programme. During the year 2016-17, a total of 127000 women were imparted education under various educational activities.

NCDC encourages women cooperatives to avail assistance under its various schemes. A large number of women members are engaged & involved in cooperatives dealing with activities related to Food Grain Processing, Plantation Crops, Oil Seeds Processing, Fisheries, Dairy & Livestock, Spinning Mills, Handloom and Powerloom Weaving, Integrated Cooperative Development Projects, , etc. Women cooperatives are now covered under Weaker Section Programme for the purpose of availing subsidy and concessional funding during the remaining period of the 12th Five Year Plan programme under Central Sector Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Cooperation. Cumulatively, as on 31.03.2016 NCDC has sanctioned and released financial assistance of Rs. 746.24 crore and Rs. 651.30 crore respectively for the development of cooperative societies exclusively promoted by women. In the 14263 projects/units sanctioned by NCDC in the year 2016-17, it is estimated that 11.01 lakh women are enrolled as members, out of which 879 women members are on the Board of Directors.

(H) Policy

The National Policy for Farmers 2007 announced by the Government envisages the following measures aimed at women's empowerment:

- Asset reforms under land, water and livestock for an equitable share to women farmers.
- Better access to inputs and services, science and technology, implements, credit and support services like creches, child care centres, nutrition, health and training.
- Encouragement to women for participating in group activities aimed at achieving economies of scale through farming groups.
- Involvement of women in conservation and development of bio-resources.

The Policy provisions, inter alia, include asset reforms in respect of land, water, livestock, fisheries, and bio-resources; support services and inputs like application of frontier technologies; agricultural bio-security systems; supply of good quality seeds and disease-free planting material, improving soil fertility and health, and integrated pest management systems; support services for women like crèches, child care centers, nutrition, health and training; timely, adequate, and easy reach of institutional credit at reasonable interest rates, and farmer-friendly insurance instruments; use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and setting up of farmers' schools to revitalize agricultural extension; effective implementation of MSP across the country, development of agricultural market infrastructure, and rural non-farm employment initiatives for farm households; integrated approach for rural energy, etc.

Many of the provisions of the NPF are being operationalised through various schemes and programmes which are being implemented by different Central Government Departments and Ministries. For the operationalisation of the remaining provisions of the Policy, an Action Plan has been finalized and circulated to the Ministries and Department concerned, as well as to all States and UTs for necessary follow up action. An Inter-Ministerial Committee constituted for the purpose also monitors the progress of the Plan of Action for the operationalisation of the NPF.

(I) Agriculture Census

Since 1995-96, Gender based data in Agriculture Census is being collected as per the recommendations of the Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, New Delhi . The scope of collection of gender based data has been restricted to number of operational holdings, corresponding operated area by different size classes of holdings, social group (SC, ST and others) and types of holdings (individual, joint and institutional).

Percentage of female operational holdings as per results of latest Agriculture Census 2010-11 and Agriculture Census 2005-06 is given in the following table:

| Sr. No. | Size Group | 2005-06* | 2010-11 |
|---------|-----------------------------|----------|---------|
| 1 | Marginal (Below 1.00 ha.) | 12.60 | 13.63 |
| 2 | Small (1.00-2.00 ha.) | 11.10 | 12.15 |
| 3 | Semi-Medium (2.00-4.00 ha.) | 9.61 | 10.45 |
| 4 | Medium (4.00-10.00 ha.) | 7.77 | 8.49 |
| 5 | Large (Above 10.00 ha.) | 6.00 | 6.78 |
| | All Size Groups | 11.70 | 12.78 |

* Excludes Jharkhand

Increase in percentage of female operational holders during different Agriculture Censuses indicates participation of more and more women in operation and management of agricultural holdings in the country.

(J) Rainfed Farming Systems (RFS)

To mainstream development of rainfed areas in a sustainable manner, Rainfed Area Development (RAD) Scheme is being implemented in the country from the year 2014-15 as a component of National Mission for sustainable Agriculture (NMSA). The major objective of the RAD is to make rainfed agriculture more productive, sustainable, remunerative and climate resilient by promoting location specific Integrated/Composite Farming Systems and to promote conservation agriculture practices for sustainable use of natural resources.

Under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), Per Drop More Crop, i.e., Per Drop More Crop component (PDMC) of PMKSY is being implemented by Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers' Welfare from 1st July, 2015. PDMC mainly focuses on water use efficiency at farm level through precision/ Micro Irrigation (Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation).

Under the framework of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Sub Mission on Agro Forestry (SMAF) has been launched during 2016-17 with an aim to expand the tree coverage on farmland in complementary with agricultural crops. SMAF will accelerate the programme "Medh Par Ped".

Guidelines of all these schemes envisage that at least 50% of the allocation is to be utilized for small, marginal farmers of which atleast 30% are women beneficiaries/farmers.

(K) Integrated Nutrient Management

Under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture, INM Divisions are implementing Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER), Soil Health Card & Soil Health

Management scheme; States have been requested to earmark atleast 30% of budget allocations for women beneficiaries/farmers.

(L) Plant Protection

Nation Institute of Plant Health Management (NIPHM) is a component under Sub Mission on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine (SMPPQ provides Pest Management capacity building programme to State officials. Till October 2017, total 1023 male & 276 female has participated in the training programme at NIPHM.

The Way Forward:

Realizing that it is 'Gender' that differentiates the roles, responsibilities, resources, constraints and opportunities of women and men in agriculture, precise gender information is the need of the hour. Incorporating gender into agricultural development will lead to:

- Building inherent strength of women and men to mutually learn;
- Overcoming gender based prejudices; and
- Articulating gender perspectives in development activities

In line with the National Agricultural Policy-2000 and provisions under National Policy for Farmers-2007, the strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable both for men and women. This may improve farm women's access to productive resources including agricultural extension services thereby bringing overall improvement in the lives of rural women. This may not only enhance the production and productivity of agricultural sector and improve overall national food security but would also smoothen the transition of women from being beneficiaries of the programmes & Schemes to their active participation in shaping the empowerment.