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Role of Panchayat in “WOMEN EMPOWERMENT”



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The views expressed in the articles are of the writers and not of the IES. Your views are solicited as a feedback, I.E.S. would be pleased to solve your queries.

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“There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing.”

- Swami Vivekananda

16th Annual GLOBE Partner Meeting

02/01/2012 18:00 MST- You are invited to the land of 10,000 lakes – Minnesota, USA – for the 16th Annual GLOBE Partner Meeting . The National Center for STEM Elementary Education at ST. Catherine University will host the 2012 GLOBE Partner Meeting from 16-20 July. The theme of this year's meeting is GLOBE and STEM: Building a Global Community of Citizen Scientists.

Located in St. Paul, Minnesota. USA, St. Catherine University's campus and the Crown Plaza Hotel in nearby Bloomington will be the hubs for a week of sharing successes, innovative training and developing the GLOBE global community.

Conveniently accessible via the Minneapolis- St. Paul International Airport, this year's GLOBE Partner Meeting will also offer unique opportunities for field activities and exploration of Minnesota's lakes, rivers and parks – from the nearby Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers to the University's own 110-acre forested campus.

The Minneapolis- St. Paul metropolitan region offers many recreational options for visitors. Whether the preference is outdoor exploration, shopping or arts and cultural attractions, the region is in full bloom in July with average daytime temperatures of 83F/28C and more than 12 hours of sunlight each day.

We will keep you informed of further details in the weeks ahead. For more information contact:

Tony Murphy (apmurphy@stkate.edu)

Articles are invited on the topic of **“Role of Panchayat in Desertification”** for the next issue of this Newsletter **“PANCHAYAT”**

Editorial

Women empowerment in India is a challenging task as we need to acknowledge the fact that gender based discrimination is a deep rooted social malice practiced in India in many forms since thousands of years. The malice is not going to go away in a few years or for that matter by attempting to work at it through half-hearted attempts. Formulating laws and policies are not enough as it is seen that most of the times these laws and policies just remain on paper. The ground situation on the other hand just remains the same and in many instances worsens further. Addressing the malice of gender discrimination and women empowerment in India is long drawn battle against powerful structural forces of the society which are against women's growth and development.

We have to accept the fact that things are not going to change overnight but because of this we cannot stop taking action either. At this juncture the most important step is to initiate ground level actions however small it might seem. The ground level actions should be focussed towards changing the social attitude and practices prevalent in the society which are highly biased against women. This can be initiated by working with the women at the root level and focusing on increasing women's access and control over resources and increasing their control over decision making. Further working on the aspect of enhanced mobility and social interaction of women in the society would positively influence all round development and empowerment of women in India.

To reemphasize once again, women's empowerment cannot take place unless women come together and decide to self-empower themselves. Self empowerment should be all round in nature. Once this happens then we can think about galvanizing the system towards the direction of better health facilities, nutrition and educational facilities for women at a very large scale. Self empowerment can begin by addressing day to day issues faced by individual women and tackling them with a mindset of improving the overall living conditions of women at every level and strata of the society.

The basic intent of this paper is to make everyone realize that a movement has to be build which awakens the individual self in each and every woman for creative and generative action. In this regard progressive and resourceful women in the society need to come forward to help their less privileged sisters in as many ways as possible. This shall help us sow the seed for real women empowerment in India. I hope that this document "PANCHAYAT" would be read with interest by all concerned.

Dr. Desh Bandhu
President

INTRODUCTION TO EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, racial, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities. The term empowerment covers a vast landscape of meanings, interpretations, definitions and disciplines ranging from psychology and philosophy to the highly commercialized self-help industry and motivational sciences.

Sociological empowerment often addresses members of groups that social discrimination processes have excluded from decision-making processes through - for example - discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or gender.

Empowerment is now increasingly seen as a process by which the one's without power gain greater control over their lives. This means control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. It involves power to, power with and power within. Some define empowerment as a process of awareness and conscientization, of capacity building leading to greater participation, effective decision-making power and control leading to transformative action. This involves ability to get what one wants and to influence others on our concerns. With reference to women the power relation that has to be involved includes their lives at multiple levels, family, community, market and the state. Importantly it involves at the psychological level women's ability to assert them and this is constructed by the 'gender roles' assigned to her especially in a cultural which resists change like India.

There is increasing recognition that economically empowering women is essential both to realize women's rights and to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education and welfare. In the last five years, a broad range of organizations have committed themselves to the goal of women's economic empowerment. These organizations realize that economically empowering women is a win-win that can benefit not only women, but society more broadly. It promotes women's ability to achieve their rights and well-being while also reducing household poverty, increasing economic growth and productivity, and increasing efficiency.

Defining Women Empowerment

Definition : A woman is economically empowered when she has both the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions. Women Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of Women. Empowerment is probably the totality of the following or similar capabilities:

- To have equal access to economic institutions.
- To have the power and agency to benefit from economic activities, women need to have the ability to make and act on decisions and control resources and profits.



- Having decision-making power of their own.
- Having access to information and resources for taking proper decision.
- Having a range of options from which you can make choices (not just yes/no, either/or.)
- Ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making.
- Having positive thinking on the ability to make change.
- Ability to learn skills for improving one's personal or group power.
- Ability to change others' perceptions by democratic means.
- Involving in the growth process and changes that is never ending and self-initiated.
- Increasing one's positive self-image and overcoming stigma.

Need of Women Empowerment in a billion plus populous India is required for several reasons. Women empowerment does not mean reserving seats for women in Parliament and state legislatures. Because implementation of women reservation in several state's three tier Panchayat Raj system has proved the whole reservation system as a blunder. The husband becomes the power center and the elected wife remains the rubber stamp only. If we really need to empower Indian women, we need to empower them economically educationally, and provide them proper health care and proper platform to show up their potential.

THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

The National Policy on Empowerment of Women adopted in 2001 states that "All forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at domestic or societal levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices shall be dealt with effectively with a view to eliminate its incidence. Institutions and mechanisms/schemes for assistance will be created and strengthened for prevention of such violence, including sexual harassment at work place and customs like dowry; for the rehabilitation of the victims of violence and for taking effective action against the perpetrators of such violence. A special emphasis will also be laid on programmes and measures to deal with trafficking in women and girls."

Under the Operational Strategies, the Policy provides:

- Strict enforcement of relevant legal provisions and speedy redressal of grievances with special focus on violence and gender related atrocities;
- Measures to prevent and punish sexual harassment at work place and protection of women workers in the organized/unorganized sector;
- Crime against women - their incidence, prevention, investigation, detection and prosecution to be reviewed regularly at the Central, State and District levels.
- Women's Cells in Police Stations, Women Police Stations, Family Courts, Mahila Courts, Family Counseling Centers, Legal Aid and Nyaya Panchayats to be strengthened and expanded to eliminate VAW and atrocities against women.

The Policy also provides that "Women's Cells in Police Stations, Women Police Stations, Family Courts, Mahila Courts, Counseling Centers, Legal Aid Centers and Nyaya Panchayats will be strengthened and expanded to eliminate violence and atrocities against women

The main objective and goals of National Policy of Empowerment of women are:

- Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential.
- Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation also in healthcare, quality education, career and vocational guidance, employment, safety etc.,
- De-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom on equal basis with men (in political, social, cultural and civil life)
- Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girl-child.

- Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.
- For economic and social empowerment of women various measures have been undertaken. Special attention will be given to strengthening to existing micro finance institutions and creation of new ones.

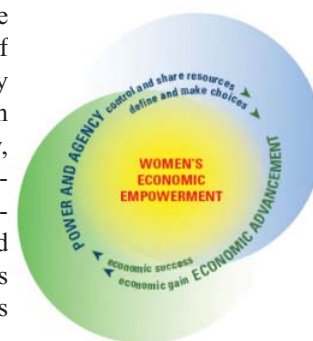
Women's Economic Empowerment: Economic empowerment is the capacity of women and men to participate in contribute to and benefit from growth processes in ways which recognize the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth.

Economic empowerment increases women's access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information. Women's economic participation and empowerment are fundamental to strengthening women's rights and enabling women to have control over their lives and exert influence in society. It is about creating just and equitable societies. Women often face discrimination and persistent gender inequalities, with some women experiencing multiple discrimination and exclusion because of factors such as ethnicity or caste.

Poverty Eradication: Since women comprise the majority of the population below the poverty line and are very often in situations of extreme poverty, given the harsh realities of intra-household and social discrimination, macroeconomic policies and poverty eradication programmes will specifically address the needs and problems of such women.

There will be improved implementation of programmes which are already women oriented with special targets for women. Steps will be taken for mobilization of poor women and convergence of services, by offering them a range of economic and social options, along with necessary support measures to enhance their capabilities

Micro Credit: In order to enhance women's access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of new and strengthening of existing micro-credit mechanisms and micro-finance institution will be undertaken so that the outreach of credit is enhanced. Other supportive measures would be taken to ensure adequate flow of credit through extant financial institutions and banks, so that all women below poverty line have easy access to credit.



Women and Economy: Women's perspectives will be included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes. Their contribution to socio-economic development as producers and workers will be recognized in the formal and informal sectors (including home based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment and to her working conditions will be drawn up. Such measures could include:

- Reinterpretation and redefinition of conventional concepts of work wherever necessary e.g. in the Census records, to reflect women's contribution as producers and workers.
- Preparation of satellite and national accounts.
- Development of appropriate methodologies for undertaking (i) and (ii) above.

Globalization: Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women's equality, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated fully. However, from the micro-level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Women & Child Development, it is evident that there is



a need for re-framing policies for access to employment and quality of employment. Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality through often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts, which may flow from the globalization process.

Women and Agriculture: In view of the critical role of women in the agriculture and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes will reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. will be expanded to benefit women workers in the agriculture sector.

Women and Industry: The important role played by women in electronics, information technology and food processing and agro industry and textiles has been crucial to develop and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors. Women at present cannot work in night shift in factories even if they wish to. Suitable measures will be taken to enable women to

work on the night shift in factories. This will be accompanied with support services for security, transportation etc.

Support Services: The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life. Women-friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

Social Empowerment of Women

Social empowerment focuses on the removal of inequalities and discrimination in all the areas whether in education, nutrition, shelter, health and environment in relation to men. Education: Education of women is a powerful weapon for empowering women. Their lack of education limits their ability to earn money and to participate in decision-making in their families and community. Equal access to education for women and girls should be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, eradicate illiteracy, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education. Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocation/technical skills by women. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a focus area. Sectoral time targets in existing policies will be achieved, with a special focus on girls and women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections including the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes/Minorities. Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of educational system in order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination.

Health: A holistic approach to women's health which includes both nutrition and health services will be adopted and special attention will be given to the needs of women and the girl at all



stages of the life cycle. The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a priority concern. This policy reiterates the national demographic goals for Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) set out in the National Population Policy 2000. Women should have access to comprehensive, affordable and quality health care. Measures will be adopted that take into account the reproductive rights of women to enable them to exercise informed choices, their vulnerability to sexual and health problems together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, TB, and water borne diseases as well as hypertension and cardio-pulmonary diseases. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases will be tackled from a gender perspective.

- To effectively meet problems of infant and maternal mortality, and early marriage the availability of good and accurate data at micro level on deaths, birth and marriages is required. Strict implementation of registration of births and deaths would be ensured and registration of marriages would be made compulsory.
- In accordance with the commitment of the National Population Policy (2000) to population stabilization, this Policy recognizes the critical need of men and women to have access to safe, effective and affordable methods of family planning of their choice and the need to suitably address the issues of early marriages and spacing of children. Interventions such as spread of education, compulsory registration of marriage and special programmes like BSY should impact on delaying the age of marriage so that by 2010 child marriages are eliminated.
- Women's traditional knowledge about health care and nutrition will be recognized through proper documentation and its use will be encouraged. The use of Indian and alternative systems of medicine will be enhanced within the framework of overall health infrastructure available for women.

Nutrition : In view of the high risk of malnutrition and disease that women face at all the three critical stages viz., infancy and childhood, adolescent and reproductive phase, focused attention would be paid to meeting the nutritional needs of women at all

stages of the life cycle. This is also important in view of the critical link between the health of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women with the health of infant and young children. Special efforts will be made to tackle the problem of macro and micro nutrient deficiencies especially amongst pregnant and lactating women as it leads to various diseases and disabilities.

- Intra-household discrimination in nutritional matters vis-à-vis girls and women will be sought to be ended through appropriate strategies. Widespread use of nutrition education would be made to address the issues of intra-household imbalances in nutrition and the special needs of pregnant and lactating women. Women's participation will also be ensured in the planning, superintendence and delivery of the system.

Drinking Water and Sanitation: Special attention will be given to the needs of women in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation within accessible reach of households, especially in rural areas and urban slums. Women's participation will be ensured in the planning, delivery and maintenance of such services.

Housing and Shelter : Women's perspectives will be included in housing policies, planning of housing colonies and provision of shelter both in rural and urban areas. Special attention will be given for providing adequate and safe housing and accommodation for women including single women, heads of households, working women, students, apprentices and trainees.

Environment: Women will be involved and their perspectives reflected in the policies and programmes for environment, conservation and restoration. Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihoods, women's participation will be ensured in the conservation of the environment and control of environmental degradation. The vast majority of rural women still depends on the locally available non-commercial sources of energy such as animal dung, crop waste and fuel wood. In order to ensure the efficient use of these energy resources in an environmental friendly manner, the Policy will aim at promoting the programmes of non-conventional energy resources. Women will be involved in spreading the use of solar energy, biogas, smokeless chulahs and other rural application so as to have a visible impact of these measures in influencing eco system and in changing the life styles of rural women.

(Source- National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001)

ROLE OF PANCHAYATI RAJ IN EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

- In rural sector, Panchayati Raj Institution are already working towards women's empowerment by reserving not less than one-third of total number of posts of members and chairpersons at all three levels.
- The panchayats should formulate and execute various programmes of economic development and social justice in order to empower the women.
- The Panchayati Raj Institution's should be involved in the implementation and execution of the National Policy for Women at the grassroots level.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT – A REALITY OR MYTH

The Government of India had ushered in the new millennium by declaring the year 2001 as 'Women's Empowerment Year' to focus on a vision 'where women are equal partners like men'. The most common explanation of 'women's empowerment' is the ability to exercise full control over one's actions. The last decades have witnessed some basic changes in the status and role of women in our society. There has been shift in policy approaches from the concept of 'welfare' in the seventies to 'development' in the eighties and now to 'empowerment' in the nineties. This process has been further accelerated with some sections of women becoming increasingly self-conscious of their discrimination in several areas of family and public life. They are also in a position to mobilize themselves on issues that can affect their overall position.

The latest news items regarding violence committed against women reveal that women's position has worsened. Tulsidas' verse from Ramayana 'Dhol, janwar, shudra, pashu, nari ye sub nindan ke adhikari' highlights the discrimination and deep-rooted gender bias which still exists in all sectors on the basis of caste, community, religious affiliation and class. The Constitution of India grants equality to women in various fields of life. Yet a large number of women are either ill equipped or not in a position to propel themselves out of their traditionally unsatisfactory socio-economic conditions. They are poor, uneducated and insufficiently trained. They are often absorbed in the struggle to sustain the family physically and emotionally and as a rule are discouraged from taking interest in affairs outside home. Oppression and atrocities on women are still rampant. Patriarchy continues to be embedded in the social system in many parts of India, denying a majority of women the choice to decide on how they live. The over-riding importance of community in a patriarchal sense ensures that women rarely have an independent say in community issues. Female infanticide continues to be common. Statistics show that there is still a very high preference for a male child in states like UP, MP, Punjab etc. The male to female ratio is very high in these states. Domestic violence is also widespread and is also associated with dowry. Leaving a meager number of urban and sub-urban women, Indian women are still crying for social justice.

A review of government's various programmes for women empowerment such as Swashakti, Swayamsidha, Streeshakti, Balika samrudhi yojana and another two thousand projects reveal that little has been done or achieved through these programmes. The discrepancy in the ideology and practice of the empowerment policy of women in India constitutes its continued social, economic and social backwardness. Women make up 52% of our country's population. Hence there can be no progress unless their needs and interests are fully met. Empowerment would not hold any meaning unless they are made strong, alert and aware of their equal status in the society. Policies should be framed to bring them into the mainstream of society. It is

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important to educate the women. The need of the hour is to improve female literacy as education holds the key to development.

Empowerment would become more relevant if women are educated, better informed and can take rational decisions. It is also necessary to sensitize the other sex towards women. It is important to usher in changes in societal attitudes and perceptions with regard to the role of women in different spheres of life. Adjustments have to be made in traditional gender specific performance of tasks. A woman needs to be physically healthy so that she is able to take challenges of equality. But it is sadly lacking in a majority of women especially in the rural areas. They have unequal access to basic health resources and lack adequate counseling. The result is an increasing risk of unwanted and early pregnancies, HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases. The greatest challenge is to recognize the obstacles that stand in the way of their right to good health. To be useful to the family, community and the society, women must be provided with health care facilities.

Most of the women work in agricultural sector either as workers, in household farms or as waged workers. Yet it is precisely livelihood in agriculture that has tended to become more volatile and insecure in recent years and women cultivators have therefore been negatively affected. The government's policies for alleviating poverty have failed to produce any desirable results, as women do not receive appropriate wages for their labour. There is also significant amount of unpaid or non-marketed labor within the household. The increase in gender disparity in wages in the urban areas is also quite marked as it results from the employment of women in different and lower paying activities. They are exploited at various levels. They should be provided with proper wages and work at par with men so that their status can be elevated in society.

In recent years there have been explicit moves to increase women's political participation. The Women's reservation policy bill is however a very sad story as it is repeatedly being scuttled in parliament. In the Panchayati Raj system, however, women have been given representation as a sign of political empowerment. There are many elected women representatives at the village council level. However their power is restricted, as it the men who wield all the authority. Their decisions are often over-ruled by the government machinery. It is crucial to train and give real power to these women leaders so that they can catalyst change in their villages regarding women. All this shows that the process of gender equality and women's empowerment still has a long way to go and may even have become more difficult in the recent years.

The main reason for the contradiction is that, targeted schemes tend to have only limited impact when the basic thrust of development is not reaching an average woman, making her life more fragile and vulnerable. To make a positive change basic infrastructure should be provided in every village and city. To begin with, providing safe drinking water supply and better sanitation not only directly improved the lives and health of women but also reduces their workload in terms of provisioning and ensuring such facilities. An access to affordable cooking fuel reduces the need to travel long distances in search of fuel wood. Improved transport connecting villages with each other and with towns can also directly improve living conditions as well as

unpaid labour time spent in transporting household items. It can also lead to access to a wider range of goods and services plus a better access to health facilities. Expenditure on food subsidy and better provisions for public distribution services directly affects the lives of women and girl children in terms of adequate nutrition. The patterns of resource mobilization by government also have significant effects on women that are usually not recognized. When taxes are regressive and fall disproportionately on items of mass consumption, once again these tend to affect women more. This is not only because the consumption of such items may be curtailed but also because the provisioning of such items is frequently considered to be the responsibility of the women of the household. Also credit policies reduce the flow of credit to small-scale enterprises thus reducing the employment opportunities for women. There is a need to have women-friendly economic policies that can enhance their social and economic position and make them self-reliant.

There is no doubt about the fact that development of women has always been the central focus of planning since Independence. Empowerment is a major step in this direction but it has to be seen in a relational context. A clear vision is needed to remove the obstacles to the path of women's emancipation both from the government and women themselves. Efforts should be directed towards all round development of each and every section of Indian women by giving them their due share.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN VILLAGES

Ms. Sonal Gupta

Project Associate, Indian Environmental Society

The empowerment in the context of women's development is a way of defining, challenges and the barriers in a woman's life through which she increases her ability to shape her life and environment. It is an active process which enables women to realize their full identity in all spheres of life.

Since time immemorial, women have played, and continue to play, a key role in conservation of basic life support system, such as, land, water, flora and fauna. Rural women play a crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields, including crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post-harvest operations, fisheries, etc.

Without total intellectual and physical participation of women, it is not possible to achieve the goals of rural uplift.

In spite of all the major roles which are played by women it is unfortunate that because of centuries of inertia, ignorance and conservatism, the actual and potential role of women in the society has been ignored, preventing them from making their rightful contribution to social progress. It is also because of distorted and/or partial information about their involvement in agriculture and consequent devaluation of their contribution that they are denied their rightful status as active producers in agriculture and access to developmental resources and services contributing to their marginalization. Women must be

empowered in such way that their knowledge, skills and technology use efficiency could be enhanced so that agricultural production multiplies at a faster pace, environmental degradation is reduced and sustainability of the resources can be maintained.

Women do jobs that are time and labour intensive such as sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, threshing, and post-harvest operations like, shelling, cleaning, grading and processing. They also contribute to decision making processes for crop production, seed production and management, post-harvest management of agricultural and horticultural produce, biomass utilization, livestock management, marketing and financial management. In addition, women take up small ventures to generate additional family income. Therefore, the role of women in agriculture and allied occupations, and household activities needs proper recognition.

In addition to their role in agricultural production, women are gainfully employed in Agro based allied activities like dairying, animal husbandry, poultry, goatery, rabbit rearing, beekeeping, floriculture, horticulture, fruit preservation, post-harvest technology, value added food products, etc. At the Village level Women Empowerment can be done by making women self

reliant, independent and an earning body for the family. Women in the villages are intensively involved in above mentioned activities but their contribution is not valued at all. Here Panchayats can play a pivotal role in forming SHG's for women and helping them to take up some activities which adds some value to their vital role in the society.

Here are the some of the professions which Village women can take up easily. These are the professions which do not have huge investment and can be easily managed.

Cattle farming and Dairy: Dairying as a profession fits which SHG's and women groups can take up easily. It is compatible with inherent routine chores performed by women. Women's involvement in dairying will not only provide them employment but will also bring in social change. Project 'AMUL' in Gujarat in one such example of the cooperative activity started by Government which has a worldwide recognition now.

Beekeeping and Honey Production: Beekeeping is an ideal profession which village women can practice. It requires less space with less investment. A few bee colonies (boxes) can be kept in a kitchen garden or backyard of the house. The honey produced from there adds to the income of the family. Bee keeping can be taken commercially by the women groups as it requires less labour and attention. Good Marketing of the products with support of Panchayats and State Government will also help to enhance the income of the women groups. The farm women, families and unemployed youth can be encouraged to adopt this hobby which could turn into a large scale profits with less investment and low labour cost.

Mushroom Cultivation: Mushroom growing is one agricultural activity in which women can play a vital role without sacrificing their household responsibilities. Mushroom cultivation is simple, low cost, suitable for rural areas, is labour intensive and can provide employment in both the semi-urban and rural areas. Mushroom cultivation helps to improve the socio economic conditions of the women. This



practice can be followed at the household level by the women in the villages.

Handicrafts from Coconut Waste: Coconut plantation plays an important role in the rural economy by generating income and employment. It is a major sector where women can dominate. The role of women in coir sector is as high as 80 per cent and 60 per cent in coconut processing and broom making. Involvement of women in coconut based handicrafts is up to 40 per cent. Women can work as groups and hence, there is need to organize women's societies and Self Help Groups with a view to empower women socially and economically.

Forest Minor Products Collection: Forest Minor products collection involves Lac production, collection of gums and raisins which one can obtain from nearby forest and trees in the village. All these can add as a supplementary income for the tribal women. There can be large involvement of women in lac cultivation, processing and lac based small scale cottage industry like sealing wax, bangles and ornaments making, etc.



Basket Making from Waste Papers and Wrappers: Basket making is one profession which village women can take up at village level. The baskets can be prepared from Bamboo, Coir and waste product such as wrappers and empty bags of chips, tea etc. Also baskets can be prepared by waste polythene bags. This is the skill which can be developed among women by the support of Self Help groups, Anganwadis etc.

Role of Panchayat: Panchayats plays a vital role in management and enhancement of village facilities. They also work for the betterment of the village people. The three bodies of Panchayat with the help of State Government have been doing work for villagers so that they can raise and earn their livelihoods easily. As mentioned Women are an important member in the family which do multi task for the families. They help in raising the children and also work in the agricultural fields.

Status of the women has to be uplifted so that they can feel confident, self reliant and independent, and also their social status can be improved. Panchayats can play a major role in this by forming women cooperative societies, Self Help Groups, by organizing small workshops for the skill enhancement of the women. The Panchayats can seek the financial support from the State Governments for the women groups and help them financially to take up the professions which help them to raise their family income. Also they can encourage women to study. They can also seek the help from Anganwadis and Balwadis center for the women. They can involve local village bodies for the improvement of the status of the women in villages.

HOW WOMEN CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

● **Developing Hobby of Gardening**

We all are familiar with the fact that these days houses are very small. Our women can come forward by developing hobby of gardening. They can keep the environment of their houses healthy. Plants add to the beauty of the houses, provide freshness to the eyes and are helpful in keeping the nearby environment clean. Questions may crop up in one's mind that can this hobby be carried out in such times of exorbitant prices when it has become difficult to make both ends meet? Answer to this question is in the affirmative. Why do we go farther away? Tulsi plant is being worshipped since long, is it very costly? It is a good source of oxygen as well as this plant has medicinal value. Are crotons very costly? Vegetables like Turai "Beans" do not need much space to grow. Besides keeping the surrounding atmosphere healthy, money is also saved. Saplings of plants can also be shared with neighbours. Again, our women can make use of their management ability by using empty cans, bottles, tins etc. as pots for growing the plants.

● **Use of Garbage Box**

Usually, we are in habit of throwing the rubbish and the waste after cutting the vegetables, graining, wiping and cleaning the floor, on the municipal road, just outside our houses. This creates nuisance which gives birth to mosquitoes and Malaria or other viral diseases. The woman who is mangers of household should use the garbage box for throwing wastes. The collected garbage should be thrown in the garbage boxes kept by the municipality. If this habit is developed, we will not only be able to keep our houses clean but, the colony, the city and our surrounding environment will also become orderly, tidy and healthy.

● **Use of Non-Conventional Sources of Energy**

India has limited resources of conventional energy. Dependency of our mass population for fuel on forests is additional cause for the vanishing forest wealth and disturbing eco-systems. Wood remains the main source of energy in many urban and rural areas of the developing countries. In developing countries, like India, women are collecting fuel wood from nearby forests, carrying it for domestic purposes and also selling it elsewhere to supplement their family incomes. The fire wood etc burnt in open country chulha wastes 82% of the fuel, since efficiency of heat utilization is only 12% (UNICEF, 1991). Out of the total amount of wood harvested in India, 42.3% is burnt as firewood and charcoal. The soil, water and forest can be

conserved if alternative kitchen fuel is provided. Eg. Smokeless Chullahs and Solar Cooker. Women can again contribute in this direction and come forward by using solar lights, solar geyser, solar cooker, smokeless chulhas etc.

● **Development of Good Habits Among Children**

Mother is the first teacher. It is she who plays an important role in the development of the personality of the child. She can instill in future generations, a respect for nature and the value of bio-diversity. She can develop good habits in the child from the very beginning as:

- Not to throw the rubbish here and there
- Keep the things in a tidy manner
- Not to spit here and there;
- To have love and respect for the nature;
- Not to spoil and harm the plants/trees, during their visits to garden public parks, school garden etc; public parks, school garden etc;
- Not to allow the children to waste the paper – the children are usually in habit of tearing away papers from their note books, a mother can keep a check on this bad habit of the child.

● **Jhum Farming**

It is practised by tribes in dense forests, wherein the villagers clear small trees, the branches of the big trees, bushes and shrubs and burn them for getting cultivating land. Whenever the natural fertility declines they repeat the same practice at another place. This practice affects the forest wealth. Women of these areas with their men folks may contribute much to conserve environment provided they should be aided with the modern agricultural inputs like fertilizers, seeds and other agricultural equipments etc.

● **Women & Tradition knowledge**

India has a rich tradition of indigenous medicine Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Amchi-besides a vast collection of living traditions of ethno-medicine scattered across the country. Even today, a large percentage of rural households in India utilize home remedies, the recipes of which have been handed down from generations. Since women are more likely to nurture the needs of the family, they tend to be primary practitioners of this indigenous knowledge. Surveys have revealed that a vast majority of local folk healers are women. Economic advancement within a community and urbanization are factors propelling larger numbers of young men in rural areas to migrate to urban areas.

CONCLUSION

Almost everyone would agree that women are more likely to be around, more stable part of the population they are more likely to make a long term commitment and investment in their communities. Women make the link between poverty and environmental degradation, and that everyone's co-operation is needed to eradicate poverty to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development will be an elusive goal unless women's constitution to environmental management is recognized and supported. Through their management and use of natural resources. Women provide sustenance to their families and communities. Women's indigenous knowledge of ecological linkages and ecosystem management are the main labor force for subsistence production. Women are already playing an essential role in the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption patterns and approaches to natural resource management.

Women have already proved her mettle in her determination towards development of her family, community, surroundings and Environment as a whole. She is persistently working to prove her worth as leaders and nature-savers since given an opportunity

after the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act -1992. It is our hope and appeal that every citizen of India will appreciate and stalwart her as an entity of honor and help her to contribute her worth to the society. Women are no longer viewed as mere victims, it is increasingly recognized that women can play key role in natural resources management as they have the knowledge and experience gained from working closely with their environment. To maintain the sustainable development, it is necessary to educate women regarding environmental problems, environmental degradation and impact on human health. Environment education should include the whole spectrum of women-nature relationships. It may be pertinent to add, that by educating a woman, a generation is educated. An alternative view of looking at the links between women and the environment acknowledges that if poor communities revert to traditional systems of natural resources management, they can manage their environment efficiently, or even improve it, despite being poor. Reducing poverty, decreasing the gap between the rich and the poor women and improving resource use can have a tremendous impact in fortifying these resources.

From Print Media

Rural Women share special link with environment: Alva

The Pioneer

Uttarakhand Governor Margaret Alva has said that the Chipko movement proved the role of hill women in making credible and astute contribution towards environmental conservation in the mountain regions.

Delivering her address at a seminar on "Role of Women in Caring for the Environment" organized by the Nainital chapter of the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) at Chalet Hall on Tuesday, she said us women particularly those living in rural area or mountain area have special relationship with the environment. As they have a have a vital role in environmental management and development, their full participation is therefore essential to achieving sustainable development.

She said the life of mountain women is intertwined with the environment to such great extent that the entire ecosystem revolves around her. Any approach to solve problems of social justice and the environment must include women as a vital part of the solution.

Solutions to environmental problems must focus on understanding the role of women in protecting and preserving our environment. Women must be involved in the decision making processes that affect the environment and natural resources; particularly because of the role of women as "managers" of these resources in their day-to-day activities", she said,

A new environmental ethic dedicated to conservation and wise use of the resources provided by Nature can only arise from an honest understanding and dedicated application of our cultural

heritage. This was the spirit and the message of 'Chipko' as a massive environmental movement and a symbol of community participations." She added. Emphasising on the need to rejuvenate 'Chipko' movement, she underlined the need for mobilising school children in the movement in order to sensitise the future generations on environmental conservation.

"Traditional practices managed limited natural resources as a large number of people are dependent upon them. The traditional lifestyle ensures considerable re-use and recycling of resources. There has always been great emphasis on avoiding waste," Governor said.

It would be practical to organize awareness generation workshops in the rural areas. She also stressed upon the need to organize training campaigns for their economic upliftment. "There must also be promotion of disseminating the gender relevant knowledge and valuation of women's role through formal and non-formal education," she said.

Secretary Mainju Kotlia gave details the activities that have been undertaken by the Nainital chapter of the AIWC. Justice PC Pant of the Uttarakhand High Court spoke on the basic rights of citizens on pure water and air. Those who were present on the occasion include Vice-Chancellor of Kumaun University VPS Arora, Prof Ajay Rawat and Uma Bhatt, and office bearers of the Nainital chapter of AIWC including. Standing Committee. Member Shanti Mehra and vice-president Munni Tiwari, large number of seminar participants and guests, among others.

50 per cent quota for fwomen in Bengal panchayats

THE HINDU

KOLKATA : The West Bengal Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to reserve 50 per cent seats in panchayats for women, while also bringing for the first time the other Backward Classes within the ambit of quota in local government elections.

Following the approval for reservation, a Bill to amend the West Bengal Panchayat Act 1973 would be placed before the Assembly in its next session. Minister of State for Information Soumen Bera told journalists here.

The meeting approved giving compensation of Rs. 2 lakhs each to villagers in North Bengal who are affected by MIG airplanes crashing on them.

It was decided to pay Rs.2 lakh each to the families of the 70

persons who are still missing following the November 13 trawler capsized in the Muriganga river off the Bay of Bengal. Of the 243 people aboard the vessel, 92 were rescued and 83 bodies recovered.

New municipalities

The Cabinet gave its assent for creation of four new municipalities out of 20 proposed to be formed in a phased manner.

It approved the setting up of a housing corporation for city policemen and creation of 936 new posts in the departments of education, health and police.

महिला सरपंच के पति की भी ट्रेनिंग जरूरी

नवभारत टाइम्स
अंजलि सिन्हा

केरल सरकार सरपंचपतियों को रास्ते पर लाने के लिए विशेष प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम चलाएगी।

पंचायतों में महिलाओं को दिए गए आरक्षण का असर धीरे-धीरे ही सही लेकिन अब दिखने लगा है। इसे और ठोस तथा व्यवस्थित रूप देने के लिए केरल सरकार ने एक अच्छी पहल की है बीते नवंबर में वहां पंचायतों और स्थानीय निकायों के चुनाव हुए। इनमें वहाँ लगभग दस हजार महिलाएं चुनी गई हैं।

केरल सरकार ने इन महिला प्रतिनिधियों के घर वालों के लिए एक विशेष प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम चलाने की योजना बनाई है। इसमें घरवालों को यह सिखाया कि जब परिवार की महिला सार्वजनिक काम में व्यस्त हो तो आप अपने घर परिवार की देखभाल कैसे करें। इसके अलावा उन्हें यह भी बताया जाएगा कि परिवार की बहू या पत्नी जो नई भूमिका संभालने जा रही है उसमें आप उसकी मदद किस-किस

तरह से कर सकते हैं। अगर दूसरे राज्य भी सरपंच पतियों के प्रशिक्षण के लिए ऐसा ही कोई प्रयास करे तो इसका दूरगामी प्रभाव पड़ेगा।

नाम का पद

अब जरा इस मामले में उत्तर भारत के राज्यों पर गौर करें। यहां की सरकारों को महिला प्रतिनिधियों के जीवन और उनके कामकाज पर

ध्यान देने की फुरसत ही नहीं है। वे इसी पर गदगद है कि उन्होंने महिलाओं को रिजर्वेशन दे दिया। फिर यहाँ का सामाजिक महौल ऐसा है कि अगर केरल जैसा कोई प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम चलाया भी जाए तो महिला प्रतिनिधियों के घरवाले उसमें शामिल होना अपनी भान के खिलाफ समझेंगे। तभी तो इधर बिहार और उत्तर प्रदेश में जो महिलाएं प्रधान या सरपंच चुनी गई हैं। उनके पतियों का 'पद' उन महिला प्रतिनिधियों से ऊपर है। आमतौर पर महिला सरपंच के पति ही सारा काम संभालते हैं। वे ही चुनाव प्रचार करते हैं और वही जीत का जश्न मनाते हैं। पंचायत भवन के सभी निर्णयों में उन्हीं का दबदबा होता है भले ही कागज पर उनकी पत्नी पद संभालती हो।

अधिकार से दूर

पंजाब के संगरूर जिले के एक गाँव का दौरा अब भी जादू है। वहाँ की महिला सरपंच से मिलने की इच्छा जाहिर की तो आयोजक मुझे एक संपन्न परिवार के घर ले गए। उनके पति ने जोरदार स्वागत किया। फिर ठहाका मारते हुए उन्होंने बताया कि सरपंच महिला खाना पका रही है। और उनका काम मैं ही देखता हूँ। हाल में मध्य प्रदेश से खबर आई कि पंचायती खजाने की चाबी चुनी गई

महिलाओं के पतियों के हाथ में हैं और वे पत्नी का फर्जी दस्तखत कर बैंकों से लेन लेन भी कर रहे हैं। पंचायती मामलों के मंची ने इस गडबडी की जांच के आदेश दिए हैं। प्रशासन की तरफ से यह भी आदेश दिया गया है कि जिन बैठकों में सरपंचों के पति बैठे उसकी विडियों रिकार्डिंग की जाएं। कुछ समय पहले गुजरात एवं हिमाचल प्रदेश की पंचायती राज संस्थाओं पर किए गए अध्ययन में भी यही बात सामने आई थी कि अधिकतर महिलाएं पंचायतों की नामधारी सदस्य होती हैं और पंचायतों की वास्तविक जिम्मेदारी पति या ससुर संभालते हैं। जाहिर है कि महिला प्रतिनिधियों को उनका वास्तविक अधिकार नहीं मिल सका।

मौजूदा पितृ सत्तात्मक ढांचे में इन महिलाओं का घरों के अंदर सशक्त न होना ऐसी कड़वी सच्चाई है जिससे कोई इंकार नहीं कर सकता। गुजरात एवं हिमाचल प्रदेश में हुए सर्वेक्षण में एक भी पंचायत सदस्य ऐसी नहीं मिली जिसके नाम जमीन का कोई टुकड़ा या मकान था, जबकि इनका परिवार गरीब या भूमिहीन नहीं था। इन प्रतिनिधियों में से 66 फीसदी के परिवारों के पास 20 एकड़ या उससे अधिक जमीन थी। वैसे तो केरल में भी स्थिति अच्छी नहीं होगी, तभी तो प्रशिक्षण के लिए कार्यक्रम बनाया गया है लेकिन प्रमुख बात यह है कि सिर्फ शासनादेश जारी करने के बजाय वहाँ समस्या से निपटने के लिए व्यावहारिक कदम उठाया जा रहा है। दरअसल वहाँ की सरकारें अपने सामाजिक राजनीतिक दायित्वों को लेकर काफी सचेत रही हैं। राजनैतिक स्तर पर भी सरकारों ने कई महत्वपूर्ण कदम उठाये और नए नियम बनाए हैं। सरकारी प्रयासों का ही नतीजा है कि साक्षरता में यह राज्य अक्ल रहा है देश के दूसरे हिस्से में तथा दूरदराज तक वहाँ की महिलाएं कमाने के लिए निकल पाती हैं। कौन सा राज्य होगा जहाँ केरल की नर्स नहीं देखी होगी। साफ है कि वहाँ महिलाओं की गतिशीलता पर रोकटोक कम है। लेकिन समाज का समग्र बदलाव अभी बाकी है। परंपरागत रूप से मातृवंशी समाज होने के बावजूद वहाँ घरेलू हिंसा कायम है तथा पैतृक संपत्ति में बेटी को बराबर का हक नहीं मिलता। वहाँ भी किसी न किसी रूप में पितृसत्ता के कई दुर्गण घरों में कायम हैं। जैसे पुरुषों का घर की जिम्मेदारी नहीं लेना या नशाखोरी आदि करना। इसीलिए स्थानीय निकायों की महिला प्रतिनिधियों को कई तरह की समस्याएं झेलनी पड़ रही हैं जब केरल इस्टिट्यूट ऑफ लोका एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन की ओर से पिछले निकाय सदस्यों के बीच एक अध्ययन कराया गया तो पता चला कि चुनी गई महिलाओं को परिवार का सहयोग नहीं मिल पाता। प्रतिनिधियों ने विस्तार से बताया कि किस तरह छोटी-छोटी बातों पर घर में क्लेश होता है। उनका यह

भी कहना था कि अगर सरकार के स्तर से परिवार के सदस्यों को समझाया जाए तो वे बात समझ भी सकते हैं। इसी को ध्यान में रखकर यह योजना बनी। इसके लिए प्रशिक्षण का जो कोर्स बनाया जा रहा है उसमें सभी घरेलू मामलों को शामिल किया जायेगा। मकसद है— पुरुषों को संवेदनशील बनाना।

एम्पावरमेंट की जरूरत

यह ठीक है कि केरल की महिलाओं को कई तरह की समस्याओं का सामना

करना पड़ रहा है, मगर उत्तर भारत की स्त्रियों की तुलना में उनकी हालत फिर भी बेहतर है। केरल ही नहीं, दक्षिण के अन्य राज्यों में भी भ्रूण हत्या, दहेज हत्या या बलात्कार के मामले कम होते हैं उन राज्यों की सरकारें भी स्त्रियों की समस्याओं को लेकर कहीं ज्यादा संवेदनशील हैं। इसलिए केरल से प्रेरण लेकर केंद्र तथा राज्य सरकारें महिलाओं के हित में नियम कानून बनाएं। पंचायतों में महिलाओं को आरक्षण का लाभ तभी मिलेगा जब उनका एम्पावरमेंट हो।

महिला कृषकों के भी बने क्रेडिट कार्ड : स्वामीनाथन

दैनिक जागरण

- भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान संस्थान में किसान संगोष्ठी
- किसानों के हित में कई बदलाव करने की जरूरत

पश्चिमी दिल्ली, जागरण संवाददाता : देश में हरित क्रांति के जनक कहे जाने वाले कृषि विशेषज्ञ व राज्यसभा सांसद डॉ. एमएस स्वामीनाथन ने कहा कि अभी किसानों के हित में कई बदलाव करने की जरूरी है। सबसे पहले कृषि मंत्रालय का नाम बदलकर कृषि या किसान कल्याण मंत्रालय कर दिया जाना चाहिए। इसके अलावा महिला कृषकों को भी किसान क्रेडिट जानी होने चाहिए। इससे कृषि का विकास होगा। स्वामीनाथन भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान संस्थान पूसा में आयोजित अंतरराज्यीय किसान संगोष्ठी को संबोधित कर रहे थे।

संगोष्ठी में भारी संख्या में राजस्थान से किसान पहुंचे थे। स्वामीनाथन ने कहा कि मौजूदा व्यवस्था में सिर्फ पुरुष किसानों के क्रेडिट कार्ड बनाए जाते हैं। महिला कृषकों के नहीं, जबकि देश में बड़ी संख्या में महिलाएं भी खेती के काम में

लगी हैं। यदि महिला किसानों को क्रेडिट कार्ड जारी किया जाता है तो वे लाभान्वित होगी ही, कृषि उपज भी बढ़ेगी। उन्होंने कहा कि संसद के शीतकालीन सत्र में इसके लिए बिल पेश करंगे।

उन्होंने कहा कि 120 करोड़ आबादी की खाद्य सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के लिए किसान व वैज्ञानिकों की भूमिका अहम है। इसलिए खेती ऐसी हो, जिससे किसानों को ज्यादा से ज्यादा लाभ मिल सके। भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान संस्थान के निदेशक डॉ. एच एस गुप्ता ने कहा कि महंगाई के कारण खेती में लागत बढ़ गई है। इसके मद्देनजर ऐसे शोध किए जा रहे हैं, जिससे किसानों को अच्छा लाभ मिल सके। बायो खाद उन्हीं में से एक है। इसमें लागत भी कम आती है और इस्तेमाल से उपज अच्छी होती है इस दौरान संस्थान के संयुक्त निदेशक के विजय राघवन, मीडिया प्रभारी जेपीएस डबास व सभी विभागों के अध्यक्ष मौजूद थे।

महिलाओं को बनाया जा रहा स्वावलंबी

दैनिक जागरण

कृष्ण वशिष्ठ, सोनीपत

गरीबी रेखा से नीचे जीवन यापन करने वाली महिलाओं की जिले में चल रही स्वर्ण जयंती ग्रामीण स्वरोजगार योजना (एसजीएसवाई) ने दशा व दिशा ही बदल दी हैं काफी तंगहाली में जीवन, बसर करने पर मजबूर महिलाओं के इस योजना से जुड़ने के बाद जीवन जीने के मायने ही बदल गए हैं योजना से जुड़ी अधिकांश महिलाएं अपना ब्यूटी पार्लर, पशुपालन व्यवसाय, सेनेटरी नेपकिन का उद्योग व किराना स्टोर आदि चलाकर पुरुषों के मुकाबले कई गुणा आमदनी कर ही हैं और गर्व से सिर ऊंचा कर अपना व अपने परिवार का गुजर-बसर कर रही हैं। योजना ने जिले में अब तक साढ़े तीन हजार से अधिक महिलाओं को स्वावलंबी बनाया है, जो किसी न किसी व्यवसाय से जुड़ी हुई हैं। योजना के तहत महिलाओं को ब्यूटी पार्लर, टेराकोटा, सिलाई-कढ़ाई आदि का प्रशिक्षण भी दिया जाता है। यह प्रशिक्षण पाकर अधिकांश महिलाएं उसी व्यवसाय में अपना कैरियर बना रही हैं।

बाजार का न होना आया महिलाओं के आड़े : एसजेएसवाई से जुड़ी और विभिन्न व्यवसाय चला रही महिलाओं का कहना है कि वे विभिन्न प्रकार के उत्पाद बनाने में पारंगत तो हैं और भारी संख्या में बना भी लेती हैं लेकिन नजदीक कोई बाजार न होने के कारण उन्हें अपने दामों की वाजिब कीमत नहीं मिल पाती है। यही कारण है कि कुछ महिलाएं प्रशिक्षण लेकर काम तो शुरू कर लेती हैं, लेकिन उनके उत्पाद को बाजार भाव अच्छा न होने के कारण वे इस काम को बीच में भी छोड़ देती हैं

योजना के तहत दिया जाता है लोन : दलाल : अतिरिक्त उपायुक्त डा. एस एस दलाल ने बताया कि एसजीएसवाई के तहत वर्ष 2009-10 में जिले में 199.37 लाख रुपये की राशि स्वीकृत की गई थी। इस वर्ष योजना के तहत विभिन्न समूहों को 103.52 लाख रुपये तथा व्यक्तिगत लोन के तहत 15.49 लाख रुपये की सब्सिडी जारी की गई। 19.40 लाख रुपये लोगों को विभिन्न रोजगारों के प्रशिक्षण पर खर्च किए गए तथा 25.40 लाख रुपये विभिन्न स्वयं

सहायता समूहों को रिवोल्विंग फंड भी जारी किया गया। योजना का मुख्य उद्देश्य ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में गरीबी रेखा से नीचे जीवन बसर कर रहे परिवारों को बैंक से ऋण व अनुदान राशि मुहैया कराकर गरीबी रेखा से ऊपर उठाना है।

बन गए आधा दर्जन से ज्यादा ग्रुप

इस योजना के तहत जिले में कई तो ऐसे गांव हैं जहां सबसे पहले एक ग्रुप ही बनाया गया। इन ग्रुपों में अधिकांशतः महिलाएं ही शामिल थीं। ग्रुप की सदस्य महिलाओं ने ऐसा कमाल दिखाया गया उनके देखा-देख इन गांव में आधा दर्जन से अधिक ग्रुप बन गए। इनमें गांव जुआ में अब 8 लिबासपुर में 10 और खानपुर कला में भी आधा दर्जन से ज्यादा स्वयं सहायता सक्रिय हैं और आपस में लेन-देन कर अपना-अपना स्वरोजगार चला रहे हैं।

खुद व अन्य का भी जीवन स्तर बढ़ाया : ज्योति

एसजेआरवाई से करीब दो वर्ष पूर्व जुड़ी गांव खुमपुर निवासी ज्योति ने बताया कि उसका पति अपाहिज है। एक समय था जब उसका परिवार रोजी-रोटी को मोहताज हो गया था। इस योजना से जुड़ने के बाद उसने गांव में बीपीएल कार्ड धारकों का एक ग्रुप बनाया तथा धीरे-धीरे इसकी कार्रवाई आगे बढ़ाई। बाद में उसने सेनेटरी नेपकिन बनाने का प्रशिक्षण लिया। प्रशिक्षण के बाद सब्सिडी पर मिले लोन से उसने ग्रुप की सदस्यों के साथ सेनेटरी नेपकिन का एक छोटा सा उद्योग खड़ा किया। घर में चलाए जा रहे इस उद्योग में घरेलू कामकाज से समय निकालकर ग्रुप की सभी सदस्य नेपकिन बनाने लगीं और इसे डीआरडीए के अधिकारियों की मदद से बाजार में बेचने लगीं। बाजार में उनके नेपकिन की आज अच्छी खासी मांग है और आज स्थिति यह है कि वह अपना तो गुजारा ठीक ढंग से कर ही रही हैं साथ में ग्रुप की अन्य महिला सदस्यों का भी जीवन-बसर खुशहाली से हो रहा है।

Messages

This magazine is very a useful source to the social workers as well as voluntary organizations which are working in the field of environment.

Dr. Nand Lal, *Secretary, Sarvodaya Gram Vikas Sansthan, Uttar Pradesh*

The articles are good in the panchayat issue.

Dr. S.G.S. Swamy, *Fellow, Karnataka State Council for Science and Technology, Karnataka.*

We find your newsletter very useful.

Ms. Suman Sharma, *Secretary, Sarswati Mahila Vikas Samiti, Delhi.*

The magazine is very informative and reassures the need for such a magazine when ecological imbalances are man-made.

Narayana Vishwanath, *Chairman, Sri.V.Narayana Iyer Memorial Trust, Chennai.*

The General published is very useful.

N.K.Pandit, *Chairman, Skylife, New Delhi.*

Journal Panchayat provides latest information on Government plocies and scientific development in the field of environment.

Mohinder Thakur, *Lecturer, Distt. Mandi.*

I find your articles very knowledgeable.

Santwana Kumari, *Project Co-coordinator, Mahila Vikas Sansthan, Aligarh.*

Role of Panchayats in Environmental Management

ENVIS Newsletter

Glimpse of the Website

www.iesenvis.nic.in

ENVIS CENTRE ON ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The website has compiled all the relevant data and comprehensive information on different components of Panchayati Raj and Environment. The website contains information on databases developed; geographical distribution of Panchayats; success stories, areas of Panchayati Raj co-operation; elections, finance, query services; bibliography; resource repository etc.

We hope that the information contained in the website will suffice your requirements.

We would appreciate your comments & suggestion about the website so that we can update it as per the requirements of our browsers.

Wish you a Happy browsing on www.iesenvis.nic.in

The Centre invites for Publications :

- Reports on Panchayati Raj (specially related to environment) and rural development
- Short report on seminars/workshops on the related topics are also invited. Those found suitable will be published in the newsletter.
- Articles for the newsletter "Panchayat" are invited.

Forthcoming Events

- **GLOBE Teachers Training Workshop Hyderabad**, Andra Pradesh- February, 2012
- **GLOBE Teachers Training Workshop**, Bhubaneswar, Orissa – February, 2012.
- **Conference on "Youth Exploring Nature for Conservation of Wetland and Biodiversity"**, at Udaipur, Rajasthan, during February, 5-7, 2012
- **GLOBE Training Workshop at Varanasi and Patna**, April-May, 2012

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To
