

WOMEN'S ROLE AND EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR

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INTRODUCTION

As farmers, workers, and entrepreneurs, women play an important role in the agricultural sector and in developing the local economy. With increasing involvement in land and water management and as water and fodder collectors, women provide vital support to rain-fed/dry farmland and livestock in areas where the soil is not productive, rainfall is stagnant/insufficient and men have moved in search of work, leaving women behind for more agriculture and co-operatives of small forests and local businesses. Women are the backbone of any developed society. The vital role of women in any society ensures stability, progress and long-term development of the nation.

In developing countries such as India, agriculture continues to attract and employ female workers but fails to provide them with recognition for employed or self-employed workers. Women make up 38% of agricultural workers in developing countries. It is also estimated that 45.3% of agricultural workers consist of women only. But a large number of women are still “invisible donors” under the auspices of Indian society. Their appointments are temporary and include all forms of uncertainty in their income cycle. The future of Bharat is changing and India is witnessing a transfer of power not only to the big cities but also to the countryside of our great nation.

Details of the roles played by women in Agriculture and their associated activities are as follows.

AGRICULTURE

In particular, rural women engage in agricultural activities in three different ways depending on the socio-economic status of their families and regional characteristics. They act as:

- Paid Employees.
- A farmer who does work in his country.
- Managing certain aspects of agricultural production through labor and participation in post-harvest harvesting activities.



LIVESTOCK

Livestock is the first livelihood used to meet the needs of the household and to supplement the income of the farm.

- Cleaning of animals and sheds
- Watering cattle
- Milking animals
- Collection of rivers
- Preparing dung cakes
- Collection of farm yard manure.

POULTRY

Poultry farming is one of the major sources of local economy. The level of women who participate in poultry farming at the local level is within the poultry industry.

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

As mentioned above, women play an active role in agricultural actions and agricultural activities, even though at a different level. As a result their contribution to agricultural production is undoubtedly very important, although it is difficult to quantify with any accuracy. It is often said that women produce 60-80 percent food. However, contributing to gender-based agriculture is problematic because in many agricultural households men and women are involved in crop production. It can be attempted to allocate output by gender by presumptuous that specific crops are grown by women and others by men and then aggregating the value of women's and men's crops to determine the share grown by women.

Direct product comparisons are possible between male and female-dominated households, but as the latter tend to have smaller farms and use fewer inputs, their effect is less natural. Women-headed households represent between 3 and 38 percent of all households and produce between 2 and 17 percent of the total food production.

HOW WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT CAN HELP THE WORLD

Economic empowerment of women can reduce poverty for all. To achieve this, we need to first fix the broken economic model that now undermines gender equality and creates greater economic inequality. The neoliberal model has made it difficult for women to have high-quality and well-paid jobs; addressing inequalities in unpaid care work, and the influence of women and decision-making power are restricted. To achieve women's economic empowerment, we need a human economy that works for women and men alike, with everyone, not just the richest 1%.

Government has also begun implementing various strategies to promote the rights of women farmers who aim to close the policy gap in the sector.

1. Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)
2. States Extension Programme for Extension Reform
3. Sub Mission on Seed and Planting Material (SMSP)
4. National Horticulture Mission
5. Self Help Groups

CONCLUSION

In this paper we collate the empirical evidence on women's roles in agriculture. The contribution of women to agricultural and food production is clearly significant. However, it is impossible to verify empirically the share produced by women because agriculture is usually a venture among household members and involves a range of resources and inputs that cannot be readily assigned by gender and the government's initiatives implementing for women empowerment.

