

Decoding Agrarian Crisis: A Gender Perspective

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Dr. Shashi Bala



V.V. Giri National Labour Institute

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NOIDA



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Preface

Agriculture is the largest employer and it provides employment to both Men and Women but the ratio of their employment in the sector is not significantly different. This difference gives rise to gender inequalities in the sector. In many parts of the world, the women are the majority of labour in the Agriculture sector.

The gender inequality in the Agriculture sector is not a small issue. The gender inequalities exists in the form of very few land rights held by women, difficulty in accessing the resources such as raw materials, finance, machinery, etc.; non-payment or low payment of work, insecurity in employment and lack of decision making power.

Women are involved in much more non- productive activities because of which their work is never valued. Women is always assumed to peruse the household work, bear and rear the children even if she is involved in an economic activity or is earning. The type of employment especially in Agriculture is decided on the basis of gender which is an injustice to women.

Present research study focuses on the inequalities faced by women in the Agriculture sector which causes great loss to the economy as well as to the society. The role played by women in Agriculture is effective and if they are provided equal opportunities the nations can fight hunger and poverty in a sustainable way. Providing equal rights to the women can be beneficial for the whole community. There should be equal development policies for women in Agriculture such as providing education opportunities, training and extension services of Agriculture.

The present study is an attempt to promote and implement a fair and equitable approach towards gender dimensions. We are hopeful that the present research will be beneficial for all the stakeholders in their endeavor to reduce the existing gender inequalities in the Agriculture sector.

I congratulate Dr. Shashi Bala, Fellow and her team for endeavor in these directions.

Dr. H. Srinivas
Director General
V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, Noida



Acknowledgement's

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood especially for rural areas in many nations. Both male and female labours are employed in this activity but the norms, roles, decision are not equal for both genders. The input for women in Agriculture is high but their roles/work/activities are limited, pre decided and are purely based on gender.

The role of women in Agriculture is presumed to be secondary or supportive in nature whereas the males are presumed to perform the primary tasks, own the land, other rights and great decision making power.

The rural or agricultural women are required to be provided with training which will strengthen their access to agricultural resources, increase their decision making ability and help them to pursue the primary roles and make them independent in their life.

Our endeavour with this report is to highlight the inequalities faced by women in Agriculture sector arising because of gender discrimination. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Dr. H. Srinivas, Director General, V. V. Giri National Labour Institute, Noida for providing us the opportunity to initiate this study and to the VVG NLI team for their support to conduct and complete this important study.

A special thanks to the entire project team Ms Nimra Khan (Research Associate) and Ms. Manju Singh (Computer Operator) for their concrete continuous tireless efforts in shaping this report. I also express my gratitude to Shri B.S. Rawat for indepth editing & proofreading of this report.

Finally, to my pillars of support, my family, who has always illuminated me, especially when I extend my work beyond office hours. Their personal cooperation are precious treasure to me.

Dr. Shashi Bala

Fellow

V. V. Giri National Labour Institute



Chapter 1: International

Women in Agriculture

The women's role in Agriculture is the most effective means of fighting hunger and poverty in a sustainable way. The basic rights of women, especially in rural areas ranges from the fundamental right to bodily integrity, to the freedom to marry and if/when have children. Whether she can exercise her right to learn to read and write, to own land, to have access to water, machinery or livestock, to avail the banking services can play a decisive factor in women's chances to provide for herself and her family. If the women possess the opportunity to make decisions and self-organize, the whole community will get benefit from it.

In the labour market, women are often paid starvation wages. Women in Africa and large parts of Asia make up the majority of the Agriculture labourforce in subsistence and small scale farming. Since the official statistics is unable to capture the unpaid work of women in garden, field or household, they are insufficient to represent the women's actual share in Agriculture work. Women in Africa and Asia who lives in rural areas are often affected doubly by discrimination.

IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development) describes the feminization of Agriculture is having profound and far reaching effects as the number of female headed households are increasing. These effects are both positive and negative. The priority of future development policies like offering qualification opportunities, Agriculture training, and extension services should be made. Initially, it is important to increase the number of women in Agriculture extension and research.

Gender role in farming system

Joshi. A and Kalauni. D (2018) conducted a survey study in three wards of Kanchanpur of Nepal to examine gender specific inputs of labour in vegetable production activities. Majority of Nepalese populace pursue Agriculture as the primary occupation for their livelihood, especially in the rural areas of Nepal. Both male and female population takes part in these diverse activities of Agriculture still the roles are gender specific and decision making is significant.

There are only 25.7% female headed households in Nepal. Participation of Nepalese women and men in economic activity is 55.2% and 71.6% respectively. The involvement of women is much more in non-productive activities such as household chores and other farm activities which do not account the value of their work. An ideal Nepalese household is where a woman does the household work and man generates incomes. Usually, the responsibility of men is to earn through non-farming or farming activities whereas the responsibility of women is to bear and rear children, tending of animals and household chores and if the male migrates for better job opportunities, the burden of work increases over women. So now she has to work at the farm and household both. All the tasks



except ploughing and transporting of final produce can be performed by women, because these two tasks are exclusively performed by men.

From the study it can be concluded that women in rural area of Nepal are illiterate and are predominantly involved in Agriculture. The labour input of females in vegetable farming is recorded higher in the overall activity as compared to men. Exclusively it was found that women were involved specially in activities like construction of fences, use of fertilizers, transplanting, cleaning and harvesting of vegetables, whereas males has high involvement in preparation of land. Though the role of women in vegetable cultivation is very high but their contribution is taken as supportive or secondary in nature while the role of male is taken as dominative in nature because he has the ownership of land and great decision making power. It was noticed that providing training to rural women helps in strengthening the women's access to resources also strengthen their decision making power. To improve the women's role in Agriculture it is recommended by the author to provide training and incentive in decision making power, project and programs to address the complementary roles of males and female farmers, security of land tenure and greater access to extension services.

Gender Inequalities in Agriculture

Sexsmith, Kathleen, et al (2017), explained that the gender inequalities in Agriculture persist due to 5 dimensions that are:

1. **Land Rights:** It is very uncommon for a women to hold land rights, even if they do that is for relatively small portion. Foreign investors do not deal with women who own lands. The women's access to land is often linked with household needs, not commercial.
2. **Productive Resources:** It is very difficult for women farmers to access resources, production inputs, credit facilities, extension services, new innovations from the markets due to discrimination.
3. **Unpaid Work:** Women wage workers are facing longer working hours, often resulting in unpaid work.
4. **Insecure Employment:** Women's are working on temporary insecure employment/jobs in Agriculture due to less opportunities of work; even the employment conditions including the wages are always poor for women workers. Moreover, crowding of women in fields can also expose them with the fear of sexual harassment and physically arduous work.
5. **Decision Making:** The decision making power still lies in the hands of male whether inside the households or women's under representation in producer co-operatives or workers group and in dispute resolution bodies.

The recommendations and general lessons to improve the gender equality in Agriculture:

- (1) Recommendations of all Stakeholders:
 - (a) Implementation and practice should be focused.
 - (b) A fair and equitable approach of gender should be adopted.



- (c) Working with women as key stakeholders in the outcome of the investment principles.
 - (d) The strategies that should be implemented must be developed by focusing on local gender norms.
- (2) Recommendations for Investors:
- (a) Throughout the partners and value chain an explicit strategy for the empowerment of women should be developed and adopted.
 - (b) The gender commitments should be inserted in the contracts with host Government, customers and suppliers.
 - (c) Female participation in community consultation should be ensured; also women-only consultations should be additionally conducted.
 - (d) Women's need in community development agreements should be fulfilled.
 - (e) It should not be assumed that the knowledge from participant men to non- participant women is passed and the participation of women in local farmer or employee training programs should be ensured.
 - (f) Gender impacts should be monitored on an ongoing basis; more gender sensitive business models and plans should be adopted and the progress should be annually reported.

Role of Gender in Adoption of Technology

Hossain.M (2019) in his paper investigated whether the household head's gender has any association with the decision regarding the adoption of technology and commercial Agriculture in rural Bangladesh. It is further investigated that whether the food security of the adopters significantly differs on the basis of household head's gender.

Bangladesh is a county of Agriculture in which the foremost development priority is to reduce the poverty and to ensure food security of the people. In Bangladesh farming communities are represented by marginal and small farmers disproportionately (84.4% of all the farm households) who are generally resource poor. The incidence of rise of female headed households has stemmed the concern over technology adoption or commercialization in Bangladesh.

It is found in the study that the access of crucial inputs such as land, labour, credit and extension services is usually in very less for the female-headed households. Taking account of Bangladesh in such perspective, it is evidenced from this paper that gender is a matter for adoption of technology and commercialization of Agriculture. Also one of this papers finding suggest that hybrid crop cultivation is strongly influenced of the gender of the household head such as male lead households are much prone than female lead households to grow hybrid crops which is a matter of concern for policy as the female-headed household's share has increased in the past years. A similar strong influence of gender is also witnessed in the case of cash crops.



Hence, it is suggested that the policymakers should take into account such gender differences and researches should be carried out to understand the underlying causes, because if these barriers are eliminated then the food security of these female headed households can also be improved.

SAARC and Gender Inequality in Agriculture

In the pattern of employment by economic activity, there is similarity among SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries that Agriculture is the main source of employment for women except in Maldives. In Maldives 5%, women are employed in the Agriculture 24% in the industry and 39% in the service sector which provides the maximum employment to women. On the other hand Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh provide 49%, 73% and 77% employment respectively to women in the Agriculture Sector. The second place is occupied by the service sector followed by industry. While comparing gender with reference to the pattern of engagement in different sector of economic activities of SAARC countries, it is noticed that the percentage of women is more compared to men in the industry however very low in Agriculture and service sectors in Maldives. On the other hand in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka the ratio of male is less than female in Agriculture and high in industry and service sector (Tarique. M and Sultan. A. Z 2006). Following is the state of Gender in some countries of SAARC.

Pakistan's Gender Dimension in Agriculture

The Agriculture sector of Pakistan holds a great portion of working age women, out of the total working women population 76% are employed in Agriculture sector. Irrespective of their large contribution there is deficient investment in the sector to protect their health and productivity of women workers. In 2014 it was witnessed that maternal mortality was 260 per 1000 women whereas female life expectancy (67 years) is lower than male counterparts.

The data from state bank of Pakistan in 2013 shows that the women access to financial services is slightly lower than males, but the situation is moderately improving. According to another statistics of Pakistan bureau 2008 the male applicants are also leading in borrowing activities from the banks which states that women are facing difficulties in accessing credit facilities.

On a bright side the participation of women in Agriculture has increased from 15.66% to 17.26% since 2008 till 2014 according to economic survey. It has increased in rural areas and decreased in urban areas. This trend represents that community has accepted the women's role in economic (farm) activities and increased literacy levels of women have implied that they have great comfort level in job market (particularly in primary sectors).

Climate change effects and Gender Inequalities of BRICS Nations

(Cruz. P et al 2016) argue that especially in rural areas social innovation can act as a promising tool for enhancing the adaptive capacity of women. The poor and disadvantaged are most affected by the natural disasters, rising sea level, erratic weather, etc. As climate changes it becomes very difficult to derive an Agriculture livelihood and acquire sufficient water quantities. It has also resulted



in displacement of millions of people and these complications affect the women most. Although the majority of world's poor is a woman who suffers from the cultural biases that elevates the risk. In BRICS countries everyday challenges of changing climate is faced by millions of marginalized people, especially women.

It is evident that changes in climate affect women more than men, particularly rural women and girls. In developing countries especially in rural areas women are living in extreme poverty and they are heavily dependent upon Agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods. The climate change has seriously threatened the Agriculture sector. The constitution of women of the rural population of age 18-49 in Brazil is 46.8% followed by 48.6% in China, 48.7% of India and 48.9% in Russia. In South Africa women excluded the share of male by 4%. The BRICS overall population of women aged 15-49 is 49.4%. Within BRICS the contribution of women in Agriculture and rural economic activities ranged from 24.5% to 48.6%. Taking the average share of economically active population of female in Agriculture in BRICS is 32% approximately-that is 10% more than points below the average for developing countries (43% virtually). Except China in all other BRICS countries the share of female is considerably low: 24.5% in Brazil, 24.7% in Russia, 29.6% in South Africa and 32.4% in India, whereas it is almost equal to the share of males in China. It can be interpreted that even after having almost half of the rural population in BRICS, women are suffering from great difficulties that stops them in participating in rural economic activities and hence they are not able to achieve the economic autonomy.

Increased prevalence of erratic access to water and drought has become more time consuming and more dangerous for women's domestic chores. In areas where the irrigation is not proper the time spent for collecting water is increased as women have to travel to far locations to collect water and they also face increased threats of violence. Degradation of water sources because of overflow from waste water system, women will be endangered specially because of their domestic chores activities require dealing with unboiled water for cleaning and cooking. A high percentage of rural households are using dung, coal, wood or Agriculture residues to cook on traditional stoves or open fires. Keeping the traditional labour and roles of rural households in mind women generally spend more time in cooking as compared to men and hence they are much more exposed to indoor smoke than men. The noteworthy rural/urban divide categorizes that rural women are much more disadvantaged in the scenario of combating the ill effects of climate changes. The effects of climate changes has put the women on front lines but the legal and cultural structures always prevent them to access funding, to adapt to these changes or to mitigate. Hence, a powerful tool towards the reduction of women's vulnerability to climate change and carbon induced hardships can be social innovation.

Chapter 2: National

As per NSSO's Periodic labour force survey for the period of January to March 2019, the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is defined as the percentage of population in labour force and according to Current Weekly Status (CWS) it is the number of persons either employed or unemployed on an average in a week of 7 days preceding the date of surveys. Whereas, Worker Population Ratio (WPR) is defined as the percentage of workers in the population. The estimate of workforce in the CWS provides the number of persons worked for at least 1 hour on any day during the 7 day preceding the date of survey.

Table 1: Female's Labour Force Participation Rate [LFPR] and Worker Population Rate [WPR] in urban areas all over India (CWS)

Period	LFPR	WPR
April-June 2018	14.6	12.8
July-Sept 2018	15.3	13.4
Oct-Dec 2018	15.4	13.5
Jan-Mar 2019	15	13.3

Source: NSSO -Periodic Labour force Survey (Jan-March 2019)

The distribution of female workers in current weekly status are classified into three broad categories according to their status in employment. These broad categories are: Self-employed, regular wage/salary employee and casual labour. In the category of self-employed two sub categories are own account worker and employer while in the unpaid categories as helper in the household enterprises.

Table 2: Distribution of Female Workers According to Their Status of Employment (CWS)

Period	Own account worker	Helper in household	Self employed	Regular employee	Casual labour
April-June 2018	23.3	9.9	34.5	56.1	9.4
July-Sept 2018	22.7	9.6	33.4	56.1	10.6
Oct-Dec 2018	22.4	9.5	33.1	57.9	9.1
Jan-Mar 2019	22.7	9.2	32.8	58.1	9.1

Source: NSSO -Periodic Labour force Survey (Jan-March 2019)

Whereas, female workers are also distributed in broad categories like Agriculture sector, Secondary sector and Tertiary sector and unemployment rate in Current Weekly Status provides an average picture of unemployment in a short period of 7 days during the survey period. According to the CWS approach, a person was considered as unemployed in a week if he/she did not work even for 1 hour during the week but sought or was available for work at least for 1 hour during the week, as mentioned below.

Table 3: Distribution of Female Workers in Different Sectors and Their Unemployment Rate (CWS)

Period	Agriculture sector	Secondary sector	Tertiary sector	Unemployment rate
April-June 2018	6.7	29.1	64.2	12.8
July-Sept 2018	8.1	27.9	64	12.7
Oct-Dec 2018	7.5	27.9	64.7	12.3
Jan-Mar 2019	6.9	28.1	65	11.6

Source: NSSO –Periodic Labour force Survey (Jan-March 2019)

The LFPR according to CWS for different states all over India is second lowest in Uttar Pradesh for females in urban area and similar pattern is also noticed in WPR as:

Table 4: LFPR And WPR In Uttar Pradesh for Females In Urban Area (CWS)

Period	LFPR	WPR
April-June 2018	7.6	6.5
July-Sept 2018	7.2	6.5
Oct-Dec 2018	7.7	6.3
Jan-Mar 2019	6	5.3

Source: NSSO –Periodic Labour force Survey (Jan-March 2019)

Agriculture Census

Table 5: Number of Operational Holdings and Area Operated by Gender in All over India

Size Class	Gender	No. of Operational Holdings	Area Operated
Marginal	Male	85383	32659
	Female	14716	5214
Small	Male	22303	31286
	Female	3469	4813
Semi-Medium	Male	12318	33182
	Female	1645	4353
Medium	Male	4995	28586
	Female	543	3078
Large	Male	753	12071
	Female	66	1035
All class	Male	125751	137784
	Female	20439	18493

Source: Agriculture Census 2015-16



From the above table it is visible that the percentage of female operations holders and area operated by females is significantly less when compared to the males in each and every size of class nevertheless, it is also observed that the percentage of female operations holder has increased from 12.79% in 2010-11 to 13.96% in 2015-16, apart from this the area operated by females has also increased from 11.72% in 2015-16 than 10.36% in 2010-11. It can be believed that the female participation rate in the management and operation of the agricultural lands has increased which is a positive sign for India.

The total number of operational holdings and area operated includes the individuals, joint and institutions holdings.

Table 6: Distribution of Number and Area by Size Group and Gender in Uttar Pradesh

Size class	Gender	Number	Area (ha.)
Marginal	Male	17502	6750
	Female	1583	542
Small	Male	2835	3935
	Female	169	233
Semi-medium	Male	1252	3393
	Female	58	157
Medium	Male	362	1991
	Female	13	71
Large	Male	22	307
	Female	1	8
All size group	Male	21972	16376
	Female	1824	1011

Source: Agriculture Census 2015-16

The **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) 2005** focuses at increasing the living security of people in rural area by assuring hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work launched by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. The Act also targets at women empowerment by defining that women should constitute at least one third of total workers. From the inception, it is noted that MGNREGA has supported women in acquiring employment and assisted them to carry out their household activities.

MGNREGA acknowledges the significance of incorporating gender equity and empowerment in its design. Several provisions in the Act and its guidelines aim to ensure that women have equal and easy access to work, fair working conditions, equal payment of wages and representation in the decision making bodies.

**Table 7: The Women Person Days Out of Total**

Year	Percentage
2016-17	56.16
2017-18	53.53
2018-19	54.59
2019-2020	54.67

Source: www.mgnrega.nic.in.

The worksite facilities provided to the female workers also includes crèche, separate toilets for women and the total women mates at national level is 23,757 (22%). In order to build the capacity of the program a 4 day residential Self Help Group training programme is initiated which has trained a total of 75,000 women SHG members across 11 states. MGNREGA promises that it does not do any gender bias in wages provision and also has separate schedule of rates for women and elders.

In MGNREGA labour market appears to be a complex household decision influenced by several socio-economic factors. In case of the probability of women works participation in MGNREGA are negatively influenced by migration of their households, number of working males in their family, highest education level of household members and positively influenced by SC/ST social group and number of children below 10 years.

A woman- managed community financial system

Since the 1970's vast expansion of India's banking network has bypassed the rural poor especially women. The women were never recognized as a business client to the bank and were rarely served beyond token participation in credit programs sponsored by government. Traditionally poor rural women have shown good financial discipline in managing the economy of her household by setting aside small amounts to meet the specific needs such as debt redemption, wedding, schooling, etc.

In India's Andhra Pradesh when a community based women group channeled savings and credit and used it to meet their specific needs, a dramatic transformation was given to the rural financing services and catalyzed successfully formation of capital accumulation of asset and increased participation of poor in the market. Two community driven rural poverty reduction projects subsumed by Indira Kranthi Pratham (IKP) supported by international development agency and World Bank named as the Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project (APDPIP) and the Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project (APRPRP), are implemented in South India since 2000. A threefold strategy is pursued by IKP. First, it helps to generate self-managed local instructions of poor women, with core activities like thrift and credit services. Second, it helps to diversify and expand the livelihood base for women. Third, it helps the poor to influence and discover the mechanisms of markets which help in sustaining equity and growth. By the end of march 2007, by creating a hierarchy of interdependent institutions of



poor – following this strategy, IKP mobilized 8 million women in 6,30,000 Self-Help Groups, consisting of 10-15 women each representing the poor households of Andhra Pradesh. At village level 28,282 Village Organizations (VO) were federated from these groups, which in turn at the sub-district level formed 910 confederations at the mandal, termed as Mandal Samakhya (MS). Loans are provided to the group members from their deposit of small amount of money into a common pool. The collective decisions are taken by women, they closely supervise how the loans are used, also pressurize the members to repay loans and make deposit promptly.

There is a macro level impact of this program through which the women are making the markets work for the poor in various ways such as by widening and deepening the access to finance of poor, by building a pro-poor financial sector, promotion of enterprise among the poor and bringing livelihoods into focus, utilizing the emerging coproduction model in rural finance, and by using financial literacy as a strategic byproduct (Gender in Agriculture sourcebook: 2009)

Rural Non-Agriculture employment in India and inequality

(Biradar. R 2005) Rural non- Agricultural employment has dampening effect on unemployment, poverty and income inequality and its growth has occupied a central theme of rural development paradigms. There is an exhibition of different dimensions of rural employment structure since 1970s. The author has analyzed data from 16 major states from India, from period 1972-73 to 1999-2000.

In rural areas, the growth rate of male workers has a considerable decline whereas in respect of female workers negative rate of growth is witnessed.

The worker's participation rate (WPR) initiated to decline marginally in the late 1980's; sharply raised in early 1990's, and steeply declined in late 1990 both in rural and urban areas. The level of education in WPRs reveals that the WPR tend to decline up to a certain level and thereafter rise with different degrees across male and female workers with increased level of attainments in education in both rural and urban areas. It implies that at the intermediate level both extremes of education attainment the WPRs are higher and lower. The attribution to decline in WPR is due to:

1. Increase in unemployment rates among illiterates and literates up to primary and among the old aged people and youth.
2. In favor of educational institutions withdrawal of workers from labour market.
3. Ratio of population rises neither in education institution nor in labour markets.

The unemployment rates are traditionally higher in urban than in rural areas. Taking the level of education, the unemployment incidence is quite higher among the highly educated workers. In the incidence of unemployment of both male and female workers who are or literate up to primary level of education there was a marginal rise.



The rural employment quality, in the case of women especially, is deteriorating significantly during the post reform period. The reason behind this is the increase in the rate of casualization and informalisation of employment in recent years. The casualization incidence is not uniform across the different level of activities and education both in rural and urban areas. It is witnessed to be quite high among the illiterate women in comparison with the illiterate men, particularly in rural areas. The increase in casualization and informalisation of employment in formal sector has resulted in feminization of rural employment.

Gender Dimensions in study area

Bareilly

Bareilly is one of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh with the population of male 2,357,665 and female 2,090,694. To eradicate the gender inequality various measures are taken in the district. To strengthen the health facilities CMS lady takes care of district's women hospital, 102 can be dialed to call ambulance for pregnant ladies and various schemes of health department for women such as:

1. Janani Suraksha Yojna (JSY)
Under the national rural health mission it is a safe motherhood intervention. The implementation of this program is with the objective to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality by promoting delivery institution among pregnant women.
2. Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK)
Launched on June 2011, to benefit pregnant women and to motivate them to opt for institutional delivery of their babies rather than to deliver at their home.

Some of the other social schemes available in the district for the development of women:

3. Pension scheme for destitute women.
4. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
5. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna (PMMVY)
It is a maternity benefit program, it is a scheme for pregnant and lactating women of 19 years or above for the first live birth and is a conditional cash transfer scheme introduced in 2017.

Varanasi

Varanasi is one of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh with the population of male 1,921,857 and female 1,754,984. The sex ratio in the state is 913 whereas the male literacy rate is 83.77% and for female is 66.69%. To eradicate the gender inequality various measures are taken in the districts. A Mahila thana is there to address the women's grievances of the district and schemes for woman such as pension for destitute women are running for women's financial support.



Gender Inequalities: A Case Study

Preliminaries	In rural areas of India, the growth rate of male workers has a decline whereas the female workers growth is witnessed to be negative.
Introduction & Background	In India and many other countries Agriculture being the primary occupation for the livelihood of population (especially in rural areas). Both male and female population is employed in the Agriculture but the roles, ratio of their employment, their decision making ability are gender specific.
Methodology	It is essential to understand the important concern of the equality of women participation in the Agricultural sector. An attempt has been made to look into these matters through the case studies, collected through in-depth participatory approach during May 2020. It is a matter of great concern that the role of women in Agriculture is most effective as it helps in fighting hunger and poverty in a sustainable way as analyzed through the research undertaken on this subject and cases described.
Case 1	<p>Shanti is a farmer from Narauli village of Muzzafarpur district in Bihar, India. She is 70 years old besides farming she has to work as Agricultural labourer on field of others. She earns INR 110 for each day that she finds work. Her husband was rickshaw puller, now too weak to work and has 4 sons out of which 3 are painter and labourers and one is receiving education in college.</p> <p>Shanti owns a house but no crop land of her own. For last 2 years she have leased 0.17 acres of land and paid a rent of Rs 3500 for it. All the work on land is done by family members.</p> <p>During 2017 when they started preparing the land for paddy cultivation, they spent money on tractor seeds manure urea and irrigation but all went in vain as the crops were destroyed by the floods soon after. They received no compensation from Government or insurance agency for the crop loss.</p>
	<p>The household now survives on the primary income of shanti and her eldest son. They still have a debt of Rs 13500 and continue to take credit from shopkeepers and doctor for their living.</p> <p>Source: Newsclick.com</p>
Case 2	<p>Rakhi Turi is a housewife of a slum in Bolpur town, her husband is a rickshaw puller. Her husband used to earn Rs 1600 per month which was not enough for a family of 5. Rakhi was searching for work when DRCSO intervened with vermicomposting making venture supported by innovative Challenge Fund, KUSP.</p>



	<p>Rakhi with group of friends showed her interest and constructed a pit to make vermin compost. The male members of their family showed their supported by collecting vegetables and other wastes. They started making high quality vermin compost with total production of 400kg from 2 vats a month. Rakhi could spend 1-2 hours a day after her regular household work and earned 200 in first month. Rakhi was very happy as she was able to earn by giving her extra time and acclaimed to make the business larger in future.</p> <p>Source: DRCSC newsletter.</p>
Results	<p>It is noticed from the above-mentioned cases that in the absence of literacy, training & opportunities women are not able to secure the equal rights as much as the male in the Agriculture sector. If provided the opportunities and support she can earn and help to run her family.</p>
Summary & Evaluation	<p>Women experiences many difficulties and inequalities in the Agriculture sector due to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in illiteracy. • Increase in rate of capsulation and informalisation of employment. • Payment of fewer wages. • Discrimination.
Conclusion	<p>The role of women in Agriculture is most effective as it helps in fighting hunger and poverty in a sustainable way. The official statistics are unable to capture the unpaid work of women in farm, household, that is why they are inefficient to represent the women's actual share in Agriculture work.</p>
Recommendations for the future	<p>The priority of future development policies like offering of opportunities, qualification, and agricultural training and extension services should be made. Initially, it is significant to increase the number of women in Agriculture extension and research.</p>
End Matter	<p>By providing the opportunity to women to make decisions and self-organization, the whole community will get benefit from it.</p>



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