

Part – V: Women in The Economy

Economic empowerment is the key to open up avenues of power by enabling women to gain personal identity and social status. Helping them to acquire basic amenities and services by empowering them economically can only assure equal status to them.

In India, only about 30% of women are in workforce. In contrast, in Nepal nearly 80% of women are in workforce followed by China (71%), Bhutan (67%) and Russia (57%).

- Women constitute only 3% of police force in India and a small number in Indian Army. Whereas, women play an important role in armies of many countries, including the US, Israel, China, Russia, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.
- IMF has estimated that, if we raise the number of female workers at par with the number of male, GDP of US would expand by 5%, Japan by 9% and India by 27%.
- World Bank estimates that eliminating barriers that discriminate against women working in certain sectors could increase labour productivity by as much as 25%.
- World fact book of Central Investigation Agency suggest that if just 1% more girls enrol in schools in India, the country's GDP would rise by an estimated \$5.5 billion.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of UN states that if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields of their farms by 20 to 30 %, raising total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5-4%. We should work to mainstream the half potential of our country so as to ensure sustained economic development.

Government's Initiative:

- National Rural livelihood Mission

- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh: working exclusively for poor women by providing them with regular funds and facilitating market linkages.
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana: has given confidence to lakhs of women in opening their first bank accounts and a break-through to overcome the various cycle of poverty and debt.
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana: to help them securing a decent employment to move out of poverty.
- Sukanya Samridhi Yojana: launched under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme
- UDAAN Scheme.

Suggestions:

- Institutional capacity building for women's development by strengthening SHGs and NGOs.
- Ensure provisions of skill training, technology transfer, technical support and promotion of market linkages.
- Establish effective delivery system at state, district and village level.
- Ensure convergence and implementation of programmes of the participating ministries through single window sanction facility.
- Linking SHGs with micro credit facilities to reduce poverty.
- Ensure more women's participation in MGNREGA.
- Strengthen Women's access to easy credit in rural sector including farm loans to women farmers.

The main aim should be to bring women under financial inclusion in order to obtain sustainable development.

(For Women & Education visit Part - VI)