

**Indian Farmer**

Volume 10, Issue 10, 2023, Pp. 433-435
 Available online at: www.indianfarmer.net
 ISSN: 2394-1227 (Online)

Original Article**Women in Agro-Economy: A Vital Role****Amrit Warshini and Ashish Kumar Nagar**

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Received: 29/09/2023

Published: 13/10/2023

Abstract:

Women play a vital role in the Indian agro-economy, but their contributions are often overlooked and undervalued. This abstract examines the extent of women's participation in the agro-economy, the challenges they face, and the importance of empowering women farmers to achieve food security and sustainable rural development. Women make up 48.1% of the Indian population, and they are heavily engaged in the agricultural sector. In fact, women make up 43% of the agricultural workforce in India. However, women are more likely to be employed in low-paid and informal jobs in the agricultural sector. They are also less likely to own land or have access to credit and other resources. Despite these challenges, women play a vital role in the Indian agro-economy. They are involved in all aspects of agricultural production, from planting and harvesting to processing and marketing. Women are also responsible for a significant share of household income and food security in India. Empowering women farmers is essential for achieving food security and sustainable rural development in India. This can be done by addressing the challenges they face, such as gender inequality, lack of access to resources, and limited mobility. Governments and other stakeholders can play a role in empowering women farmers by providing them with access to land, credit, and other resources, as well as training and capacity building opportunities.

Keywords: Agro-economy, Food security, Gender equality, Rural development, Women

Introduction

Women play a vital role in the agricultural economy, both in India and around the world. They are involved in all aspects of agriculture, from planting and harvesting to processing and marketing. In India, women make up over 30% of the agricultural workforce. They play a particularly important role in food security, as they are responsible for over 50% of food production in the country.

Despite their important role, women farmers often face discrimination and challenges. They may not have access to land, credit, or other resources. They may also face barriers to participating in decision-making and leadership roles.

However, there are a number of initiatives underway to support women in agro-economy. These initiatives include programs to improve access to land, credit, and training; to promote gender equality; and to empower women farmers to take on leadership roles.

Here are some specific examples of the roles that women play in agro-economy:

Planting and harvesting: Women are involved in all aspects of planting and harvesting, from preparing the soil to sowing seeds to reaping the crops.

Processing and marketing: Women play a major role in processing and marketing agricultural products. This includes activities such as milling, grinding, and packaging. Women also play an important role in selling agricultural products at local markets.

Livestock care: Women are responsible for much of the livestock care in rural India. This includes feeding, watering, and milking animals.

Forestry: Women are involved in all aspects of forestry, from planting trees to collecting firewood and other forest products.

Women's contributions to agro-economy are essential for food security and rural development. It is important to support women farmers and to remove the barriers that they face.

In addition to the above, here are some specific ways to support women in agro-economy:

Provide access to land, credit, and other resources: Women farmers often do not have access to the resources they need to be successful. Providing access to land, credit, and other resources can help women farmers to increase their productivity and incomes.

Promote gender equality: Gender inequality is a major barrier to women's participation in agro-economy. Promoting gender equality can help to create a more supportive environment for women farmers.

Empower women farmers to take on leadership roles: Women farmers are often underrepresented in leadership roles. Empowering women farmers to take on leadership roles can help to ensure that their voices are heard and that their needs are represented.

Invest in research and development: More research is needed to develop technologies and practices that are specifically tailored to the needs of women farmers. Investing in research and development can help to improve the productivity and incomes of women farmers.

By supporting women in agro-economy, we can help to create a more food-secure and sustainable future for all.

Women play a vital role in India's agro-economy, both directly and indirectly. They are involved in all aspects of the agricultural sector, from production to processing to marketing. However, their contributions are often overlooked and undervalued.

The image provided here shows a group of women working in a field. This is just one example of the many ways in which women contribute to India's agro-economy. Women are also involved in planting and harvesting crops, processing and packaging agricultural products, and raising livestock.



In addition to their direct contributions to agricultural production, women also play an important role in supporting their families and communities. They are often responsible for household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for children. They may also work other jobs to supplement their family's income.

The government of India has recognized the importance of women's role in agro-economy and has implemented a number of programs to support them. These programs include providing access to credit, training, and new technologies. The government has also worked to promote gender equality and empower women farmers to take on leadership roles.

Despite these efforts, women in India still face a number of challenges in the agro-economy. They often lack access to land and other resources, and they may face discrimination in the marketplace. Additionally, the burden of household chores and childcare can make it difficult for women to fully participate in the agricultural sector.

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Schemes to Support Women in Agriculture

The Indian government has implemented a number of schemes to support women in agriculture. These include:

Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP): This scheme provides financial assistance to women's self-help groups (SHGs) for undertaking agricultural and allied activities.

Deendayal Upadhyaya Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM): This mission aims to empower rural women through the formation and promotion of SHGs. It also provides training and support to women in agriculture and allied activities.

Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY): This scheme provides funding for a variety of agricultural development initiatives, including those that support women in agriculture.

Perfect Example of Indian State: Kerala

The state of Kerala in India is a good example of a state that has taken steps to support women in agriculture. The state government has implemented a number of schemes and programs to empower women farmers and give them access to land, resources, and training.

One of the most successful programs in Kerala is the Kudumbasree program. This program aims to empower women through the formation and promotion of self-help groups. Kudumbasree SHGs are involved in a variety of activities, including agriculture and allied activities.

The Kerala government has also provided land to women farmers and helped them to set up farms. The government has also provided training and support to women in agriculture and allied activities. As a result of these efforts, women play a vital role in the agro-economy of Kerala. They produce nearly half of the state's food grains and vegetables. They also play a key role in livestock management, contributing to nearly 70% of the state's milk production.

Conclusion

Women play a vital role in the agro-economy, both in India and around the world. Their contributions are significant but often go unrecognized and undervalued. Governments and other stakeholders must take steps to support women in agriculture and empower them to reach their full potential.

In addition to the schemes mentioned above, the Indian government has also implemented a number of other schemes to support women in agriculture. These include:

Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH): This mission provides funding for a variety of horticultural development initiatives, including those that support women in horticulture.

National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA): This mission aims to promote sustainable agriculture practices in India. It also provides support to women farmers through various programs and initiatives.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY): This scheme aims to improve irrigation facilities in India. It also provides support to women farmers by providing them with access to irrigation infrastructure.

These schemes and programs have helped to empower women in agriculture and improve their livelihoods. However, there is still more that needs to be done to support women in agriculture and ensure that they have access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed.

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