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PROJECT TEAM

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FOREWORD

Women constitute an integral part in the socio-economic life of the country. However, their role in economic development was not seriously recognized and, in fact, 'women's place is home' was slogan till recent past. With the expansion of education and vocational training, the contribution that women can make rises continuously. As the economy develops into a more industrialized one, more job opportunities get created and also as the service sector expands, the opportunities for women, both in formal and informal sectors, increase still further. With economic progress entrepreneurial opportunities are also created. At present rapid progress is being witnessed and women entrepreneurship has a crucial role to play. Several studies have brought out that entrepreneurship raises confidence among women and enhances their status and respect in the society. This is regarded an easiest way of women's economic empowerment. Empowerment of women in agricultural sector envisaged up gradation of awareness, knowledge and skill based on local resources and needs. In view of this ICAR, Women Development Corporations of the state and various women relating Government Organizations (GOs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have undertaken programmes for imparting training to women for the development of skill of entrepreneurial activities in the field of agriculture, which necessitates impact assessment of programme.

The present study examines viable entrepreneurial trades of women in Agriculture in Bihar and impact of these trades on beneficiaries. However, to make a comparison, 33 per cent of the samples are drawn from the non-beneficiaries group also. It has covered five popular trades, which were locally identified. The findings relating to viability clearly reveals that all the sample enterprises are viable to the extent of 2.18 times. So, identification of constraint therein is important, which the present study has critically done. Thus, I hope that the findings of this study will provide appropriate feed back to the policy makers and others having such concern.

I have full pleasure in putting on record the crucial work done by Dr. Ranjan Kumar Sinha, Dr. S D Mishra and all other team members for completing this study with meaningful results. They all in deed deserve full appreciation.

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Preface

Women entrepreneurship is one of the best ways of empowering the society by empowering its better halves the women. It can be self-employment training for the poor women and entrepreneurship to those who are educated, skilled and more resourceful. Practice of women entrepreneurship is essential both from the point of view of equity and full utilization of available human resources. Government is now well realized that building up of entrepreneurial skill is a basic requirement for achieving rapid economic progress and thus, for facilitating the development of vigorous entrepreneurial movement in the country. It is in this context various GOs and NGOs have been imparting training to women who are at large involved in agricultural operations and can be seen working with men, apart from the household activities.

In fact, there are numerous entrepreneurial activities for women in agriculture but the women have hardly conversant with them and if they have knowledge have hardly skill therefore. This situation persists more due to unawareness and thinking of non-viability of the trades of training. It is perhaps due to this the government wanted to know viable entrepreneurial trades of women in agriculture across the states. Thus, the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, on the suggestion of ICAR, assigned the present study to us along with other AER Centres for their respective states.

Present study has thus, been completed and also the draft report has been evaluated by the co-ordinator Prof. Nilabja Ghosh, Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi. We are grateful to her for giving us valuable comments and suggestions, which have been appropriately, attended while finalizing this report. The study has covered five entrepreneurial trades viz., preservation of fruits and vegetables, preparation of jam and jelly, preparation of potato chips, badi and papad, beekeeping and preparation of pickles and murabba. It covers a sample of 100 women entrepreneurs constituting 67 trained entrepreneurs and 33 non-trained entrepreneurs. The viability of these units has been worked out. We believe that findings of this study will surely benefit the policy makers and other stakeholders.

We deem it our holy duty to acknowledge and appreciate the co-operation and guidance of all those who have greatly helped us to complete this study. First of all, we are grateful to Prof. Balkrishna Jha, Hon. Director of the Centre, who acted as the guide of this work. We sincerely express our thanks to the TOs and their colleagues of KVKs – Bhagalpur, Banka and Munger. We extend our sincere thanks to the Secretaries of Mukti Niketan, Katoria (Banka) and Srijan Mahila Sahyog Samiti Ltd., Sabour, (Bhagalpur). We express our thankfulness to the respondent women for providing us necessary information and sparing their valuable time.

At the last, the present work in the outcome of the dedicated efforts made by the research team of the Centre, so we take this opportunity to thank all the members of the team.

S D Mishra

Ranjan Kumar Sinha

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