

## Government Agencies Promotion of Women Entrepreneurship in India

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### Abstract

*Women are the major source of manpower in any society. If any scheme aimed at the economic development of a nation without women will be uneven without involving them who constitute half of the world's population. Women entrepreneurship gained energy in the last three decades with the growth in the number of women enterprises and their functional contributions to economic growth. The industrial performance of the Asia-Pacific region propelled by manufactured exports has brought a wide range of economic and social opportunities to women entrepreneurs. In India, though women have played a significant role in society, their entrepreneurial skills have not been properly nominated due to the lower status of women in society. For sustained economic development and social justice, the socio-economic status, of women and their lives should be improved along with that of men. Today, several policies and programmes are being instigated for the development of women's entrepreneurship in India.*

**Keywords:** Education, Empowerment, Employment, Entrepreneur, Enhancement

### Introduction

The development of women entrepreneurs has become an important aspect of our plan priorities. It is only from the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-1979) onwards that their role has been recognized with a clear approach to women's issues from women's welfare to women's development. The government has taken several measures to encourage women entrepreneurs to set up small-scale and micro enterprises. The Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO), State Small Industries Development Corporations (SSIDCs), the nationalised banks and even NGOs are conducting various programmes including Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPs).

### Development Programmes of Central Social Welfare Board

The Central Social Welfare Board is running several programmes for the development of women and children.

### Vocational Training for Women

The Vocational Training Programme was started during the year 1975 to train women in the trades which are marketable and also to upgrade their skills to meet the demands of the changing work environment. The main objective of training interventions is to enable and empower women to access remunerative employment opportunities, which will instil self-confidence and enhance their self-esteem. At this instant Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship takes care of providing skill training to women in the country which aims at stimulating employment opportunities among women of various socio-economic levels and different age groups.

### The Program offers

1. Industrial skill training under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS)

2. Instructor skill training under the Craft Instructors Training Scheme (CITS)
3. Demand-driven Short-term courses
4. Special programs for training the Instructors of ITIs
5. Tailor-made courses as per industry demand

### **Socio-Economic Programme**

The Socio – Economic Programme of the Central Social Welfare Board endeavour to provide employment openings on a full or part-time basis to destitute women, widows, deserted and the physically handicapped, to supplement their minor family income. Besides, women entrepreneurs are encouraged to display and sell their products through Exhibition-cum-Melas organized by State Boards at the District level. The Central Social Welfare has two different types of schemes Agro-based Units and Production Units giving support for the training and employment of women under the Socio-Economic Programme.

### **MahilaSamakhya Project (MSP)**

The main goal of this project was the empowerment of women without causing any disturbance in their family and social lives. It not only focuses on women's problems but also deals with social and economic issues that concern the entire family. It helps women in rural areas to realize their rights, understand the strength of collectiveness and gradually empower themselves for a better life socially, legally, physically and emotionally. This programme was launched in 1988. It recognized that education can be an effective tool for women's empowerment, the parameters of which are:

- enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence of women
- structuring a positive image of women by spotting their contribution to the society, polity and the economy
- evolving ability to think critically
- promoting decision-making and action through collective processes
- empowering women to make informed choices in areas like education, employment and health (especially reproductive health)
- confirming equal participation in developmental processes
- providing information, knowledge and skills for economic independence;
- Enhancing access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society to enhance their participation on an equal footing in all areas.

### **Indira MahilaYojana (IMY)**

IMY was launched in 1995, it was reorganised, as Swayamsidha in 2001 is a centrally sponsored integrated programme for the empowerment of women by generating awareness through the network of Self-Help Groups of women and helping them to achieve economic strength through micro-level income generation activities and facilitate easy convergence of various services including entrepreneurship of State and Central Governments at the block level. SwayamSidha has resulted in outstanding improvement in the socio-economic prestige of rural poor women and it has helped in providing skill improvement to the poor women for income-generating activities. The evaluation report of an external agency in 2005 indicated that women in Swayam Sidha Blocks have supported their social standing in society and the awareness of social ills like alcoholism, dowry & female feticide is visible. The economic importance of women has improved after joining the SHGs. The number of women members in Panchayat levels has improved and some of them have been chosen by local bodies. The Scheme ended in March 2008. Govt. of India has desired that the State Governments should

handhold the Self Help Groups formed under the Swayamsidha scheme till the launch of the second phase of the program.

### **Women's Component Plan (WCP)**

This plan was launched in the Ninth Plan where not less than 30 per cent of funds/benefits are earmarked in all the women-related sectors. The flow of funds was monitored through an effective mechanism of inter-sectorial review to ensure that adequate funds flow to women from all the related sectors for the development and advancement of women.

### **Swarna Jayanthi Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY)**

This programme was effected in 1997 to employ the urban unemployed by encouraging the setting up of self-employment ventures of wage employment. The distinct scheme of the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP), which is a component of SJSRY, provides support to the urban poor, especially women living under the urban poverty line.

### **Technology Development & Utilisation Programme for Women (TDUPW)**

To meet the exact needs of women and to enrich the contribution of women towards technology capability building, the TDUPW has been framed by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research DSIR. The chief objectives of the programme are:

- Promoting the adoption of new technologies by women.
- Awareness creation and training of women on technology-related issues about women
- Promoting technological gradation of tiny, small and medium enterprises run by women entrepreneurs.
- Showcasing appropriate technologies and organising demonstration programmes for the benefit of women.
- Design and development of products and processes beneficial to women.

### **Swa-Sakthi Project**

Swa-Sakthi Project (earlier known as Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project). The intentions of the project are the establishment of self-reliant women's Self-Help Groups sensitising and strengthening the institutional capacity of support agencies to proactively address women's needs, developing linkages between SHGs and credit-lending institutions, enhancing women's access to resources for better quality of life and increased control of women particularly poor women, over income and spending, through their involvement in income generation.

### **Trade Related Entrepreneur Assistance and Development of Women (TREAD)**

To alleviate the problems faced by women entrepreneurs, the Ministry of Small Scale Industries (SSI) in the Government of India launched this scheme in 1998. The main objective of the scheme is to empower women through the development of their entrepreneurial skills in non-farm activities by eliminating constraints faced by them in their sphere of trade. Men and Women are like two wheels of a chariot of happiness and fulfilment. If both the wheels were in good condition the chariot would move smoothly. Women are part and parcel of society. We cannot neglect or ignore them. No society can fully be made of men only, however brilliant, efficient, powerful and handsome those men are! Though theoretically woman is recognised as socially equal to men, the old institutions-like caste, patriarchal family and religious and dominant value systems have subjected women to discrimination and still reign with considerable vigour surcharge with the spirit of male dominance.

## Conclusion

Since independence, the government has enacted many acts for the welfare of women. The Government enactments concerning women's education, women's employment, equal pay provision, crimes against women, property rights of women, marriage & divorce laws etc., have empowered women to a considerable extent. Nowadays, women are well-educated with technical and professional qualifications. Many of them have medical, management and similar degrees and diplomas. Many entered their family business as equal partners. Women in rural areas also engaged in innumerable entrepreneurs. In the face of the setback from COVID-19 in the last two years, women entrepreneurs have shown their strength, spirit and creativity in not only running their enterprises but also contributing to COVID-19 response efforts through large-scale production of masks, PPE kits and other COVID-19 essentials. Every year, WEP flagship Women Transforming India (WTI) awards showcase the successful journeys of women entrepreneurs who are at the frontiers of their fields from manufacturing, handicrafts, health and wellness to technology and automation. All these occurred with the support rendered by the Government agencies promoting women entrepreneurs.

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