

Women's role in pulse production – Constraints and prospects in India

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ABSTRACT : Women today play a pivotal role in agriculture - as female agricultural labour, as farmers, co-farmers, female family labour and (with male out-migration, widowhood, etc.) as managers of farms and farm entrepreneurs. Three-fourths of women workers are in agriculture. Women work extensively in production of major pulses, grains and millets, in land preparation, seed selection and seedling production, sowing, applying manure, fertilizer and pesticide, weeding, transplanting, threshing, winnowing and harvesting etc. Landless women agricultural labourers play a pivotal role as they are involved in most of the pulses operations. Women also augment family resources through tasks such as collection of fuel, fodder, drinking water and water for family members and domestic animals. During the course of intervention, it is also important to take into account existing gender differences in terms of accessing land, technologies and other strategic resources as highlighted. Finally, the limited technical and operational capacities of institutions (e.g. farmers training centers and extension workers) should be addressed by concerned government bodies along with conducting more pulse-agriculture-nutrition researches and partnerships. So gender mainstreaming can be done by the livelihood promotion of rural women, to provide property rights, education, food security, adoption of integrated farming systems, equal wages etc. Government can play an important role for the gender mainstreaming in agriculture in India.

Key Words : Pulse production, gender disparity, gender mainstreaming, inappropriate social system.