

## GENDER SAMVAAD EVENT LAUNCHED

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights & Welfare of Women - Schemes & their Performance, Mechanisms, Laws Institutions and Bodies

Gender Samvaad event, a joint attempt between DAY-NRLM and the Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE) to create a common platform to share experiences emerging from this effort, was organised today by the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India. The attempt is to generate greater awareness on gender related interventions under DAY-NRLM across the country and best practices, with a focus on hearing voices from the states and the field.

Gender Samvaad provides states with opportunities to:

- Understand best practices/initiatives that other states have been undertaking to improve women's agency (e.g. facilitating women's access to land rights, their engagement in farmer producer organizations (FPOs), best practices around Food, Nutrition, Health and Water and Sanitation (FNHW), in establishing strong institutions for public service delivery, and in protecting and providing redress to vulnerable groups within women (e.g. to victims of witch hunting));
- Understand gender interventions globally;
- Engage with experts and other colleagues on suggestions regarding how to handle issues/implementation barriers;
- Contribute to creation of a 'gender repository' with resource materials on best practices for gender interventions across the country/other countries; and
- Build advocacy around the need to focus on gender issues across SRLMs and the NRLM.

The event was launched today by Nagendra Nath Sinha, Secretary, Rural Development as part of the ongoing Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. The online launch event brought together a distinguished panel of experts, including senior officials of the Ministry of Rural Development. In addition, voices of women from the field, who shared their experiences on how gender mainstreaming efforts within the DAY-NRLM have helped enhance their agency were also included. A compendium of case studies presenting inspiring stories of SHG members was also released at the event.

With over 60 million women mobilised to be part of one of India's largest livelihoods programme, the Deendayal Antayodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) holds great promise for advancing women's socio-economic empowerment by organising them into self-help groups (SHGs) and federations of the rural poor. Not only are these platforms facilitating financial opportunities and livelihood support services for women, but they have also become an extended arm of governance to demand accountability from and build linkages with mainstream institutions.

In 2016, DAY-NRLM laid out a gender operational strategy to mainstream gender issues within its federated architecture, with a focus on training and capacity building of staff, cadres and institutions on gender issues. This was coupled with the establishment of institutional platforms (e.g. social action committees and gender resource centres) at the field level, so women could approach them for their grievances and to claim their rights and entitlements.

## APS/MG

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