

## Problems Faced by Women Self Help Groups for Livelihood Promotion Through "VELUGU" Programme



### Agriculture

KEYWORDS :

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### ABSTRACT

Andhra Pradesh is the fourth largest state in area and fifth most populous state in the country. Andhra Pradesh has used self help groups (SHGs) extensively as a primary tool for poverty alleviation and empowerment. Indira Kranthi Patham (IKP) is a largest poverty alleviation project in the State of Andhra Pradesh which is implemented by a registered society "Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty" (SERP) under Department of Rural Development. IKP aims to build strong institutions of the rural poor (SHGs) and enhance their livelihood opportunities so that the vulnerability of the poor is reduced. With this background in view, an attempt was made to study problems perceived by self help groups and suggestions thereof for livelihood promotion. Majority of respondents have availed benefits in the sectors with which SERP has developed strong linkages. To sustain agri-based livelihoods, SERP during implementation of this multi pronged strategy (IKP) needs to coordinate with agriculture and revenue department in provision of cultivable land, facilitate in adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. Group livelihoods pertaining to agricultural activities need to be promoted in the area by utilizing finance meant for the purpose. SERP needs to ensure that all the benefits reach a SHG in a coherent manner. With the increasing population pressure, technological advances in the competitive global market, large number of people in India are bereft of stable livelihoods. It is now widely accepted today that promotion of large number of livelihoods especially for rural poor and women has emerged as the most significant development challenge of the century. Andhra Pradesh is the fourth largest state in area and fifth most populous state in the country.

Andhra Pradesh has used self help groups (SHGs) extensively as a primary tool for poverty alleviation and empowerment. Indira Kranthi Patham (IKP) is a largest poverty alleviation project in the State of Andhra Pradesh which is implemented by a registered society "Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty" (SERP) under Department of Rural Development. IKP aims to build strong institutions of the rural poor (SHGs) and enhance their livelihood opportunities so that the vulnerability of the poor is reduced. The goal of the Indira Kranthi Patham project is to reduce poverty of below poverty level households through sustainable community based women organizations by introducing livelihood interventions through institution building, human resource capacity building and community investment fund. The main objective of Indira Kranthi Patham is to enable poorest of poor to improve their livelihoods and quality of life.

With this background in view, an attempt was made to study problems perceived by self help groups and suggestions thereof for livelihood promotion.

#### Methodology

Exploratory research design was followed for the study. Mahaboobnagar district was selected as it is one of the largest districts in Telangana region with highest number of mandals under Indira Kranthi Patham. Out of sixty four mandals, two mandals viz., Kolhapur, Achampet were selected by random sampling on discussion with IKP staff. Two villages viz., Chukayapalli and Yenamalametla from Kolhapur mandal, Uppunutala and Gattuthumen from Achampet mandal were selected at random from each of these mandals and thus, a total of four villages were selected for the study. Thirty women belonging to two groups were selected at random from each village. A

total of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents of eight groups were selected from the above selected villages for the study. The respondents were asked to express the problems perceived and suggestions thereof for livelihood promotion. The responses were recorded in terms of frequencies and percentages and were accordingly ranked in the order of magnitude.

#### Results and Discussion

It is clear from Table 1 that majority of respondents perceived diverse interest in groups (85.83%) followed by lack of encouragement to each and every group member to participate in group activities (83.33%), lack of capacity to formulate plans for group development (72.50%), lack of a rider before & during loan utilization (65.83%), less farming activity in the area (55.00%), lack of resource persons at village level (50.00%), lack of practical evidence of sustainable agricultural practices (40.00%), high cost of cultivation (30.00%), lack of remunerative price for produce at IKP marketing centres (25.83%) in order.

It is also clear from Table 1 that the suggestions given by the respondents were in the order of formation of homogeneous groups with common interest (84.16%) followed by encouragement should be given to every member in the group to participate in group activities (81.66%), capacity building of groups for formulation of plans (71.66%), provision of a rider before & during loan utilization (63.33%), increase of farming activity in the area (50.83%), creation of resource persons at village level (47.50%), practical evidence needs to be created to popularize sustainable agricultural practices (39.16%), decrease in cost of cultivation (27.50%) and provision of remunerative prices (25.00%) in the order.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on problems perceived and suggestions given for livelihood promotion n=120**

S. No.	Problems	F	Rank	Suggestions	F	Rank
1.	Diverse interest in groups	103 (85.83)	I	Formation of homogeneous groups with common interest	101 (84.16)	I
2.	lack of encouragement to each and every group member to participate in group activities	100 (83.33)	II	Encouragement should be given to every member in the group to participate in group activities	98 (81.66)	II
3.	Lack of capacity to formulate plans for group development	87 (72.50)	III	Capacity building of groups for formulation of plans	86 (71.67)	III
4.	Lack of a rider before & during loan utilization	79 (65.83)	IV	Provision of a rider before & during loan utilization	76 (63.33)	IV

S. No.	Problems	F	Rank	Suggestions	F	Rank
5.	Less farming activity in the area	66 (55.00)	V	Increase of farming activity in the area	61 (50.83)	V
6.	Lack of resource persons at village level	60 (50.00)	VI	Creation of of resource persons at village level	57 (47.50)	VI
7.	Lack of practical evidence of sustainable agricultural practices	48 (40.00)	VII	Practical evidence needs to be created to popularize sustainable agricultural practices	47 (39.16)	VII
8.	High cost of cultivation	36 (30.00)	VIII	Decrease of cost of cultivation	33 (27.50)	VIII
9.	Lack of remunerative price for produce at IKP marketing centres	31 (25.83)	IX	Provision of remunerative prices	30 (25.00)	IX

Figures in parentheses indicates percentages

It is evident from the Table 1 that majority of respondents (85.83%) perceived that diverse interests in group as a problem for which the respondents suggested formation of homogenous groups with common interest (84.16%) as social affinity and physical proximity were not taken care of in institutional building process.

The next perceived problem was lack of encouragement to each & every member to participate in group activities (83.33%) for which encouragement should be given to each and every member in the group to participate in the group activities (81.67%) was suggested. This is because they perceived that they do not participate in group activities in respective groups.

The other problem perceived was lack of capacity to formulate plans for their development (72.50%) for which capacity building of groups for formulation of plans (71.67%) was suggested as they were not empowered.

Majority of the respondents perceived that lack of rider before & during loan utilization (65.83%) for which provision of rider before and during loan utilization (63.33%) was suggested. This was because the loans were not utilized by the respondents for the purpose for which they were meant for.

The other problem perceived was less farming activity in the area (55.00%) for which increase of farming activity in the area (50.83%) was suggested. As agriculture alone was not sustainable in the area this option needs to be explored.

The other problem perceived in order was lack of resource persons at village level (50.00%) for which creation of resource persons at village level (47.50%) was suggested. This is because respondents already perceived that they have not been provided with the first hand experience in sustainable agricultural practices in the programme.

The next problem perceived in order was lack of practical evidence of sustainable agricultural practices (40.00%) for which practical evidence needs to be created to popularise sustainable agricultural practices (39.16%) was suggested. This is because they have already perceived that they were not given opportunity to interact with practicing women groups.

The other problem perceived in order was high cost of cultivation (30.00%) for which decrease in cost of cultivation (27.50%) was suggested. This is also evident through the results of technology utilization pattern.

The next problem perceived in order was lack of remunerative price for agricultural produce at IKP marketing price (25.83%) for which provision of remunerative prices (25.00%) was suggested. This was also one of the less perceived benefits in order.

#### Conclusion

India's growing population requires more and more food grains and farmers need to be dissuaded from giving up farming as it is unable to provide employment for a longer period in economically and sustainable manner.

Agriculture related science and technology have influenced the life of rural people at large and helped in reducing the food security in developing countries like India. But sustainable food production is still the primary pursuit economic liberalization and WTO regime poses a big challenge to Indian agriculture. Further, the recent spatial and sectoral changes in agri-rural environment suggest that the agriculture growth rate can be further boosted up.

Achieving the millennium development goal (MDG) of halving the proportion of people living in absolute poverty by 2015 will require agriculture to play a major role. Increasing agricultural productivity remains perhaps the single most important determinant of economic and poverty reduction and hence provides the key to achieve the MDG.

#### REFERENCE

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