

WOMEN'S COLLECTIVES FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

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Theme: Gender Equality – A Gender Perspective on Building Back Better from the COVID-19 Pandemic

**2021-22 EXECUTIVE TRAINING COURSE FOR POLICY MAKERS ON THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

THE RURAL CONTEXT FOR WOMEN FARMERS IN INDIA

In India 79% of women are engaged in agriculture and allied activities as against only 63% of men - NSSO reports.

Feminization of agriculture and Masculinization of Agricultural systems and practices going hand in hand (market integration and new technologies - do these help women?)

Experience of NGOs and women's collectives- successful models for cooperative and collective farming by women, seed protectors, natural farming; forest NTFP producers

land ownership continues to be skewed despite womens labour contribution

entitlements in agriculture follow a gender bias

Consolidate opportunities for capacity and perspective development; solidarity among organizations across India working for women farmer's rights on to a national level



Marginalized /subsistence and ecological practices



WORK COLLECTIVELY AND HOLISTICALLY

MAKAAM

Platform for advocacy and recognition of women farmers rights

- ❖ RECOGNITION -DATA
- ❖ CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT
- ❖ LAND RIGHTS
- ❖ ENTITLEMENTS
- ❖ TECHNOLOGY AND INSTITUTIONS

THEMES/ ISSUES

- Gender disaggregated data
- Recognition and land rights
- Farmer suicides and women headed households
- Women Forest dwellers - knowledge, rights and representation

MAKAAM

Forum For Women Farmers Rights



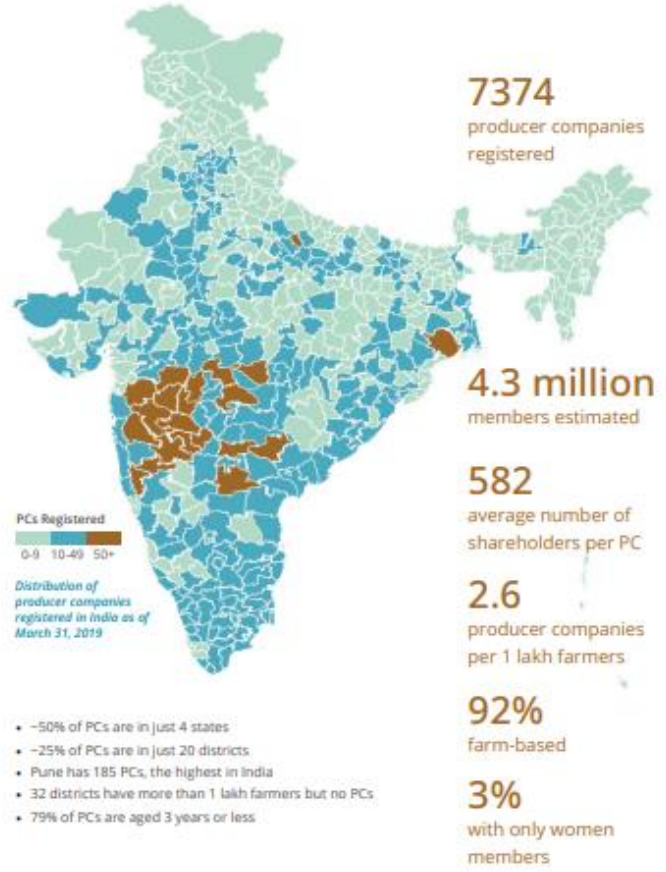
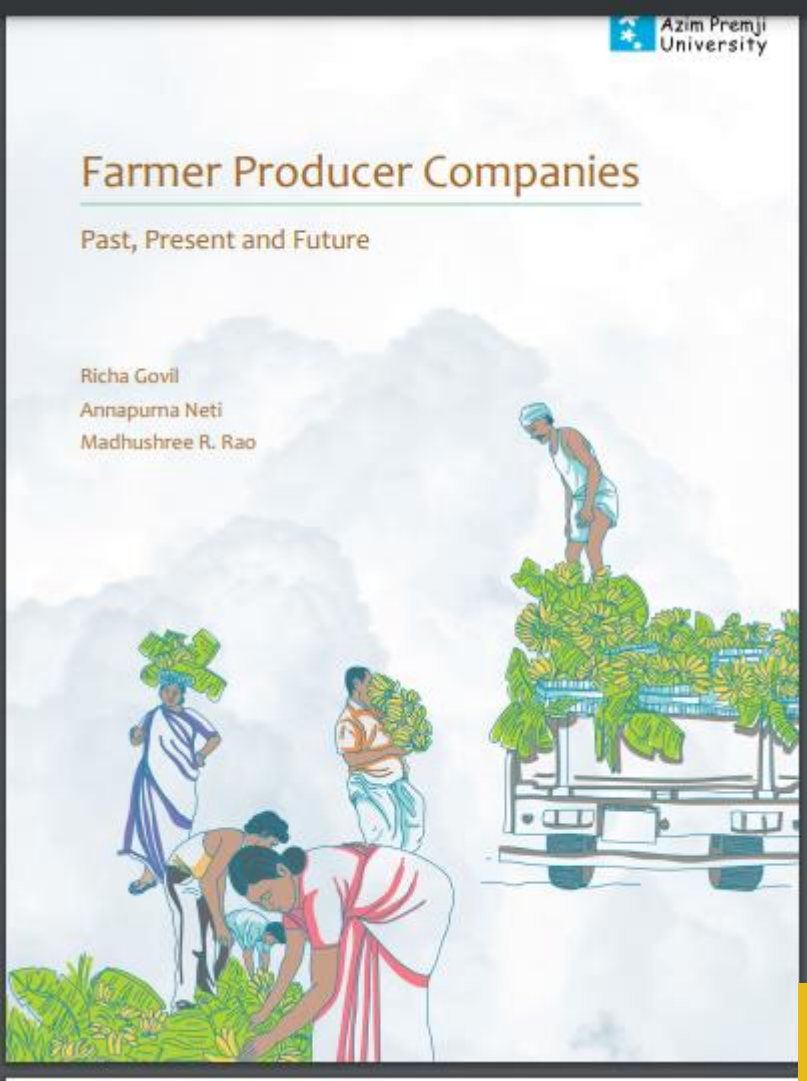
EVOLUTION OF WOMENS COLLECTIVES

- ▶ UNIONS : SEWA, WWF
- ▶ COOPERATIVES - milk, produce, services DAIRY COOPS, LIJJAT
- ▶ INFORMAL DWCPRA GROUPs - STATE RECOGNITION : MASALA AND BROOMS AND ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCE
- ▶ SHGs - from informal to FEDERATIONS; state sponsored FEDERATIONS
- ▶ NABARD SUPPORT
- ▶ **'BANKABLE' INSTITUTIONS - DHAN FOUNDATION; PRADAAN INITIATIVES**
- ▶ **HOLISTIC APPROACH TO WOMENS EMPOWERMENT :ANANDI*; DDS**
- ▶ MFI/ NBFC INTERVENTIONS
- ▶ **KUDUMBASHREE**
- ▶ **NRLM - JIVIKA BIHAR, JSLPS**
- ▶ GROUP FARMING COLLECTIVES
- ▶ FPOs

SHGs

- ▶ The SHG movement in India began in 1980s
- ▶ Government of India realized the potential of these institutions in poverty eradication.
- ▶ strengthening of SHGs by providing capacity building and mentoring support to SHG women.
- ▶ With the support from SHGs and their federations have successfully become financially sustainable and viable institutions.
- ▶ In India there are about 112 lakh SHGs, more than 4.04 lakh Village Organizations and 30,709 Cluster Level Federations managing a portfolio of about Rs. 200,000 crores -rich experience in governance and financial management which is the key to the success of the movement.
- ▶ Formed into farmers collective by engaging in some of the agriculture value chain development activities. Many SHG federations in India have been engaged in procurement of non-perishable agriculture commodities under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Government.
- ▶ SHG federations have also been engaged in primary and secondary processing for value addition to the agriculture produce. More recently SHG federations also started promoting all women FPOs under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) implemented by the Rural Development department of the State Governments.
- ▶ Under the Central Sector Scheme of 10,000 FPOs, all women FPOs are being promoted by the State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs). The decades of experience gained by the SHG women in running their institutions can be beneficial for the FPOs as well particularly in the Governance, Management and financial & market linkages.

FPCs: AZIM PREMJI UNIVERSITY



Category	Recommendations
Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote more PCs in districts with larger numbers of small producers, especially in aspirational districts
Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple producer companies organised in a two-tier structure at the block or district level • Supplier PCs: 500+ members, aggregation, grading and sorting • Market-facing companies: assured buyer for supplier PCs' produce, delayed marketing, value-addition, marketing and sales • Supplier PCs and individual farmers should own significant shares and have strong representation on the board of market-facing companies to ensure alignment with producers' interests • Market-facing companies should be invested in success of supplier PCs
Commodities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-commodity (procure only commodities produced by members in significant volumes)
Value addition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly by market-facing companies
Equity capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2:1 equity match for PCs comprising more than 80% small farmers • Disburse equity grants in 3-4 tranches to enable incremental growth • Allow external investment through non-voting shares. Protect social objectives by imposing limits on maximum amount of equity per external investor relative to total equity of farmers
Business acumen and expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring through market-facing companies, which can hire a competent team • Market-facing companies are expected to hand-hold supplier PCs
Promoting and supporting PCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplier PCs should be promoted by NGOs and other grass-roots organisations • Market-facing companies should be supported by social enterprises and other organisations with business experience • Producer companies will require support from different kinds of resource institutions at different points in their life-cycle • Link PCs to government programs and schemes • Develop a business ecosystem in blocks and districts to provide various business services to PCs
Other regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a distinct marker in registration number for producer companies so that they can be tracked and regulated differently • Simplify compliance filings and allow submission in paper form • Clarify eligibility for schemes available for cooperatives and individual farmers • Offer protection for shareholders, similar to SEBI's provisions for shareholder protection in publicly traded companies

All women FPOs are only a fraction but are functioning successfully in terms of governance and business. When the SHG women are brought into the fold of FPOs at a larger scale it will lead to the institutional and financial sustainability of these institutions.

<http://publications.azimpremjifoundation.org/2268/1/Farmer%20Producer%20Companies.pdf>

FPOs - potential for women?

- ▶ Government of India's guidelines of 2013 gave a push to the promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (a term used broadly to include Farmer Producer Companies(FPC)s and cooperatives, including cooperatives registered under legislations such as the Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies or MACS in some states) in the country.
- ▶ The Microsave study estimated India to have more than 8000 FPCs in the country by 2019, which formed 84% of the total FPOs. That means, by 2019, the country had more than 9500 FPOs. In 2019-20, Government of India came up with a scheme to promote 10000 FPOs by 2022.
- ▶ The study on FPOs by Azim Premji University also brought out a number of weaknesses and challenges faced by the FPOs. From various studies it is evident that the FPO movement is slowly emerging with only a small percentage matured and profitable and the remaining being still nascent and require incubation support.
- ▶ FPOs have gained considerable recognition in the policy making and preparation of guidelines for various schemes of Government of India, in many States, there is still not adequate recognition from the State Governments for FPOs as legitimate business organizations of the farmers.

MULTIPLE APPROACHES: Women MAINSTREAMED? NEED FOR A GENDER APPROACH

- ▶ Asset creation for women
- ▶ Opportunities for collective solidarity and autonomy as institution builders
- ▶ Voice and agency in their operations and dealing with external agencies
- ▶ Credit and capital access and equitable terms
- ▶ Value addition and production know-how ; appropriate technology

- ▶ Ecologically embedded processes - seed eg
- ▶ Equity and inclusion : single women, socially cohesive
- ▶ Impact on wellbeing : of human and nature
- ▶ Restorative and eco regenerative
- ▶ Ecological lens for conservation based livelihoods

<https://youtu.be/PsySSKQEQII?t=41>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsySSKQEQII&t=106s>

THANK YOU

- ▶ <https://youtu.be/PsySSKQEQII?t=41>