



LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND INDIA'S VNR 2020

NATIONAL CONSULTATION WITH FARMERS
24th JANUARY, 2020, JAIPUR



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The civil society organizations welcome the initiative of the NITI Aayog and the United Nations Resident Coordinator to organize Leave No One Behind consultations in Voluntary National Review on the progress of the Agenda 2030. We hope that the engagement will continue beyond the VNR and that CSOs will witness collaborations in line with the spirit of the Agenda 2030.

CECOEDECON in collaboration with ASHA, MAUSAM and PAIRVI organized the national consultation with the farmers on 24th January, 2020. We are thankful to the co-organizers for their support. We are grateful to the NITI Aayog and the UNRC for their guidance. We appreciate the efforts of Wada Na Todo Abhiyan in coordinating Leave No One Behind consultations. Our greatest gratitude goes to farmers and farmers' organizations across the country who participated in this consultation and shared their valuable experience and insights.

The consultation presented ways and means by which farmers can contribute and become an integral part of the Agenda 2030. We hope that the government/s will take note of the recommendations and will ensure that farmers stride in step with others in eradicating poverty and hunger, and establish peace and sustainability in India and the world.

Manju Joshi

Secretary
CECOEDECON

NATIONAL CONSULTATION WITH FARMERS ON LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND AND INDIA'S VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (VNR)

24 JANUARY 2020

SWARAJ

F-159-160, Sitapura Industrial and Institutional Area
Jaipur



DEFINITION OF FARMER

For the purpose of this Policy, the term “FARMER” will refer to a person actively engaged in the economic and/or livelihood activity of growing crops and producing other primary agricultural commodities and will include all agricultural operational holders, cultivators, agricultural labourers, sharecroppers, tenants, poultry and livestock rearers, fishers, beekeepers, gardeners, pastoralists, non-corporate planters and planting labourers, as well as persons engaged in various farming related occupations such as sericulture, vermiculture, and agro-forestry. The term will also include tribal families / persons engaged in shifting cultivation and in the collection, use and sale of minor and non-timber forest produce.

NATIONAL POLICY FOR
FARMERS 2007
Government of India

Organized by



in collaboration with



INTRODUCTION

A National Consultation with farmers was organized as a part of “Leave No One Behind” Consultations towards the preparation of India’s Voluntary National Report 2020 (VNR 2020), to be presented in the UN’s High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2020. The Consultation witnessed participation of more than 200 farmers and all major national farmers’ organizations. It looked at farmers as social groups and delved deep into challenges and vulnerabilities of often-left-behind farmers, ie., rainfed farmers, women farmers, tenant farmers, landless farmers, livestock farmers / pastoralists and adivasi farmers and came up with actionable recommendations and suggestions.



The participants appreciated the efforts of the NITI Aayog and UNRC to have a consultation with farmers in preparing the VNR of India. The Consultation emphasized that the SDGs cannot be achieved in the world unless they are achieved in India and for India to achieve the SDGs, small and marginal farmers, women farmers and agricultural workers are critical. One out of every 4 persons in India is either a farmer or an agricultural worker. Small and marginal farmers constitute 80% of the total farm households, 50% of rural households and 36% of total households in India.

MAJOR CHALLENGES AND VULNERABILITIES

From independence when agriculture contributed to 50% of the national GDP, farmers have had immense contribution to the Indian economy. Today, India is the largest producer of pulses, milk and jute in the world. India has the second largest population of cattle. It is also the second largest producer of rice, wheat, sugarcane, cotton and groundnut as well as second largest producer of fruits and vegetables.

However, India still has many growing concerns. Agriculture’s contribution to the GDP has steadily declined. While achieving self-sufficiency in food production, India still accounts for a quarter of world’s hungry people and is home to 190 M undernourished people. As per Global Nutrition Report (2016) India ranks 114 out of 132 countries on Under-5 stunting, 120 out of 130 countries on Under-5 wasting and 170 out of 185 countries on prevalence of anemia. Anemia continues to affect

50% of the women and 60% of the children in the country.

The resource intensive ways of Indian agriculture have led to serious sustainability issues. Increasing stress on water resources, desertification and land degradation pose major threats to agriculture and food security in the country.

Rising farm household indebtedness, continuing farmers' suicides, land alienation and landlessness, disappearing commons, de-feminization of agriculture, lack of attention to the situation of rainfed, tenant, landless and women farmers, deteriorating soil health and farmers' health due to use of harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides, were identified as major challenges. Climate change, deteriorating water availability, decreasing access to forest, singular focus on increasing productivity, unremunerative markets, lack of recognition of some categories of farmers as Farmers and policy antipathy towards farmers and agriculture are the main drivers for the poor conditions of the farmers. The failure to address these systemic concerns has resulted in poor performance of many programmes aimed towards improving the resilience and income of the farmers.

BEST PRACTICES

The government has initiated a number of programmes like PM Kisan Samman Yojana (PM KISAN), PM Krishi Sinchayi Yojana, Doubling of farmers' income, PM Fasal Bima Yojana, eNAM, Gram Haat, Soil Health Card scheme and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). The government has also set up a separate Ministry for Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries. In recent years, the land under organic/natural farming has increased and similar has been the expansion of soil health card scheme. However, these schemes are yet to deliver their promise and would need more focused efforts.



RECOMMENDATIONS

While the discussions took place on vulnerabilities and challenges of different farmers groups like rainfed farmers, tenant farmers, women farmers, landless farmers, adivasi farmers and livestock farmers (LS farmers) and pastoralists, there are some recommendations across all groups which will ensure that farmers, that too particular categories of vulnerable farmers, do not remain a left-behind group.

- Collect and publish disaggregated data for various social groups of farmers.
- Increase investment in agriculture, increase allocation for animal husbandry and fisheries.
- Trade policies to create level playing field, to increase market access for our producers and ensure remunerative prices for farmers .
- Implementation of FRA and PESA in true letter and spirit.

- Involve farmers in planning, implementation and monitoring of plans for agriculture and rural development in general.
- Social audit of all schemes and programmes should be institutionalised.

- Ensure remunerative prices are obtained by all farmers; expand remunerative MSP coverage to include more farmers, and to include MFP and LS farmers' products.
- De-link land ownership for availing benefits meant for Farmers – this will operationalize the definition of Farmer as contained in National Policy for Farmers 2007.

- Secure land and other resource rights for farmers.
- Investment in traditional livestock breeds and landraces, from seed to plate.
- Increase off-farm livelihood.

- Prevent deforestation and forest degradation, enhance biodiversity, encourage and invest in natural agriculture and secure community forest rights for adivasi farmers and other traditional forest dwellers.
- Implement Draft National Land Reforms policy 2013.

- Protect farmers' and soil health by reducing and phasing out use of harmful chemicals.

- Education on sustainable agriculture and food systems should be part of our education system, starting from schools.

- Ban in India use of chemical pesticides banned in two or more countries in the world.

- Scale up agro-ecology for mitigating climate change.
- Take concrete steps to enhance farmers' resilience through making resilient infrastructure, introducing agro-ecological approaches based on diverse cropping, providing weather information and early warning systems and improved crop and livestock insurance.

- Provide recognition to women farmers, secure their resource rights, ensure equal entitlements and create equal spaces for decision-making for women farmers.
- Reduce stamp duty when land is registered in women's name.
- Create and support women-led/friendly agricultural markets and value chains.
- Special support mechanism for widows of farmers who committed suicide.



- Ensure better infrastructure and transport to prevent food losses across the value chain.

- Encourage peri-urban and urban farming.
- Discourage diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes.

- Increase investment in agriculture to reduce rural distress and inequality.
- Ensure parity in investment so that benefits accrue equitably across the farming communities.

- Reward traditional and new agricultural practices that conserve/enhance water and soil fertility.
- Protect water commons.

- Encourage/scale up provision of grid-connected solar water pumps for irrigation.

- Review farm mechanization to ensure drudgery reduction and to prevent loss of livelihoods and employment opportunities, even as it reduces drudgery especially for women.
- Ensure that rural livelihoods are also viewed as “development” and “public purpose” to make sure that there are no dilutions to the LARR 2013.
- Reward innovation of small farmers, adivasi farmers and fisherfolk.

- Guarantee at least 200 days of work under the MGNREGA/S, with adequate outlays set aside and prompt payments made to workers.
- Recognise women as farmers and ensure inumeration of women farmers as cultivators and forest workers.
- Recognise and visiblise women's work increasing due to denial of access to forest and division of common land.

RAINFED FARMERS

Rainfed farmers compose majority of farming community in India cultivating millets, pulses, oilseeds, cotton etc. NITI Aayog's report and CWC report emphasizes that 50% of the arable land in India will remain rainfed despite all efforts. Therefore, more focus is needed in protecting and strengthening rain fed agriculture systems. Present support to agriculture and farmers remains skewed in the favour of irrigated agriculture and have largely side stepped the needs of the rainfed farmers.

The rainfed farmers challenges and vulnerabilities are compounded by a number of factors including mixed topography, varied agro-climatic zones, marginal and poor soils unsuitable for green revolution crops, significant risk of crop loss due to extended dry spells and floods, limited access to institutions, underdeveloped market access, little funds for input investments and small farms etc. They mostly have only crop per year. While farmers in the irrigated areas earn 60% of their income from agriculture, their counterpart in the rain fed areas only earn around 20-30% from agriculture. While the average yield is around 1.1 t/ha in rain fed areas, in irrigated areas it stands at 2.8 t/ha. There is a significant overlap between aspirational districts and predominantly rainfed districts where agriculture accounts for only 20%. Rainfed districts are characterized by mostly predominant tribal populations, high poverty, hunger and malnutrition.



Despite facing multiple vulnerabilities, rainfed farmers are not identified as category of farmers requiring special attention. There is no disaggregated data on rainfed farming and farmers. Setting up of the National Rainfed Areas Authority (NRRA) provided a good beginning, but it has not been able to create any marked progress. Some of the schemes which could have benefitted rainfed farmers are also largely found half hearted. Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) in its present iteration RKVY RAFTAR spends more on infrastructure than on innovation in rainfed areas. PM Krishi Sinchayi Yojana (PMKSY) aimed at completing pending watershed projects, also remains largely focused on blue water (dams and other storage) than green water (soil moisture conservation) and has not seen much financial progress in spending its allocation.

Some states are moving in the direction of recognising rainfed farming challenges through their versions of the drought mitigation programmes supported by the central government. Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are developing policies around millets. Marathwada and Vidarbha Development Board/s have policies to address disparity in investments in the region, which can be replicated in other states.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Impart education and capacity building for community led water management.
- Create community based traditional Seed Banks by modifying the present Seed Village programme and allow it to be managed by farmers' organisations in close partnership with the Department of Agriculture.
- Ensure inclusion of rainfed areas produce in PDS, MDM and ICDS for meeting nutritional needs of the population.
- Dedicate an exclusive policy for Rainfed farming in the light of its being vastly different and immensely diverse within.
- Increase investment in watershed programmes as opposed large scale water projects.
- Promote natural farming with reduced use of chemical fertilisers.
- Introduce innovative technologies to manage ground water and common water resources.



- Remove discrepancy in investment and neglect in rainfed farming and ensure participation and inclusion of rain fed farmers in policies, programmes and practices.

- Increase investment in traditional/ indigenous livestock for sustainable livelihoods.
- Enable diverse income sources both from agri and non-agri based sectors for rainfed farmers.
- Provide MSP for rainfed produce commensurate with the risk and ecosystem services provided by them.
- Create infrastructure for rainfed produce that will reduce losses and waste across the value chain including infrastructure for local processing and marketing of agricultural products.

- Setup Regional Research Centres dedicated to Rainfed Agriculture.
- Develop and strengthen local Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) on aspects of resource and infrastructure management, value addition, market linkages, accessing inputs and credit.
- Establish a dashboard for rainfed districts with appropriate indicators along the lines of the aspirational district dashboard.

BEST PRACTICES

- CSOs efforts have aimed at reducing the vulnerability, enhancing resilience and income and gather data of the rainfed farmers through a number of measures.
- BRLF has taken effort to engage CSOs with Govt programme.
- Watershed programmes in Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra have been helpful for the rainfed areas. Variants of natural farming such as ZBNF can be expanded to have an impact of scale.

TENANT FARMERS

Tenant farmers constitute one of the most vulnerable, invisible and ‘left-behind’ groups today. Tenant farmers include sharecroppers as well as ones with cash-rent-based lease arrangements with land owners. Tenant farmers remain hidden in India – protective tenancy laws in the country have turned out to be restrictive, with land-lease arrangements for agriculture being largely informal, unwritten and unrecorded, leaving tenant farmers out of the government’s vision, without access to various support services and entitlements. Estimated at 10.41 percent, area cultivated under tenancy is grossly under-reported (NSSO 70th round, 2013). Crucial data required for identification of tenant farmers and assessment of their status with respect to the SDGs remains unavailable. Micro-studies indicate that in several states, a large number of farmers committing suicides are into tenant farming.

Fully landless tenants also lack the asset of land that can act as a safety net in times of extreme distress. The very challenges and factors that make farming unviable are also leading to a rise of tenancy in the country. Land-owning farmers who are able to choose alternative sources of livelihood are increasingly moving out of cultivation, leaving agricultural production to relatively more vulnerable groups. Ecologically unviable agricultural practices also lead to increasingly higher cost of cultivation, and risk for cultivators. It is challenging for landless farmers to switch to sustainable agricultural practices, which invest in the quality of the land/soil, particularly for those on short-term leases. However, no programs currently exist to specifically address ecological or economic sustainability of this group.

In 2011, the state of Andhra Pradesh passed the Land Licensed Cultivators Act, which put the onus on the government to provide recognition to tenant farmers through a Gram Sabha based process and for provision of “Loan Eligibility Cards”. However, a study by Prof. Haque (2013) showed that only 15% of recognized tenants were able to avail formal bank loans. In the newly formed state of AP, the Act was subsequently replaced by the Crop Cultivator Rights Act of 2019, more along the lines of the NITI Aayog’s Model Agricultural Land Leasing Act, 2016, legalizing tenancy and allowing for registration of land leases for the recognition of tenants. While recognition is a welcome step, adoption of liberal leasing laws do not solve the problem of inequitable ownership of agricultural land, made worse through the use of land as a speculative asset. They also shift the burden of responsibility for identification from the state to the landowner-tenants, failing to recognize the inequitable power structures that leave small tenants vulnerable to the whims of landowners. The state of Telangana introduced a direct-benefit transfer scheme for cultivation support called Rythu Bandhu in 2017, tying the benefit amount directly to the area of land owned. The central government sponsored PM-KISAN also recognizes beneficiary households on the basis of landownership. Availability of benefits like income tax exemptions, subsidized credit, disaster compensation, along with such direct cash-transfers



which accrue to the land owners because the tenants are just invisible and unrecorded in the government system, only serve to further disincentivize landowners from formally acknowledging tenancy agreements. Without explicitly targeting agricultural support systems to cultivators, liberal tenancy laws only serve to strengthen ownership rights of landowners without benefitting tenant farmers. Uttarakhand has made comprehensive changes to its tenancy law and Maharashtra has introduced a draft law in line with the Centre's Model Land Leasing Act.

In Odisha, KALIA provides benefits to tenant farmers, and thus maintains a list of beneficiaries, duly verified at the Panchayat level, for the purpose of the scheme.

BEST PRACTICES

The rights of cultivators must be recognized independently of the rights of landowners.

Tenancy through group-farming under Kudumbashree groups in Kerala can be seen as an example of this. While tenancy or land-leasing continues to be strictly prohibited in Kerala, lands available for lease at the village level are pooled and given to Kudumbashree groups for cultivation. As the process is facilitated by the gram panchayat, it allows for both backward and forward linkages to support services like input and credit subsidies, along with market linkages, making tenancy a viable livelihood for the beneficiaries, that too women farmers' collectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identify and formally register tenant farmers across the country, and ensure their access to various entitlements meant for actual cultivators.
- Recognize women partners in the households in the tenancy agreements to ensure that they can access government services.
- Create special schemes/programmes that provide special incentives for women's group farming.
- Make allied livelihood opportunities available to landless and smallfarmers to reduce risk and diversify income sources.

- Improve long term resilience of agricultural and ecosystems by encouraging low external input agro-ecological farming.
- Take special care to include tenants in sustainable agricultural programs and tailor appropriate support systems.



- Adopt and implement all recommendations in a three-year time frame to ensure that tenant farmers are also able to reach SDGs by the target year of 2030.

- Make the states responsible for recognizing and ensuring access to services for tenant farmers by improving upon provisions of Andhra Pradesh Land Licensed Cultivators' Act 2011.
- De-link land ownership for availing support services intended for cultivating farmers, like Direct Benefit Transfers and Direct Income Transfers.
- Set up a Credit Guarantee Fund to ensure that formal credit institutions are willing to give further loans to tenant farmers following the example of Andhra Pradesh, which sets targets to reach tenant farmers through priority lending.

- Maintain a digital database of tenant farmers in every state. The database must ideally be de-linked from particular land survey numbers, allowing tenant cultivators to be recognized without any insistence on written lease agreements.
- Use Gram Sabhas and other village organizations to provide accurate identification of tenants in their villages through an application and verification process conducted every season.

WOMEN FARMERS

In rural India, around 80% of women depend on agriculture for their livelihoods; they comprise 33% of cultivators and 47% of agricultural labour. Women cultivators are at a loss without land titles. They participate in agriculture as unpaid subsistence labour and are not recognized as farmers. Hence they are unable to have access to credits and other benefits. Large numbers of rural poor women continue to exist close to the poverty line, and the clustering around the poverty line has only increased, here the smallest variance in climate impacts or any disaster can have calamitous impacts especially in the poverty impacts on rural poor women.

Recent studies point to the increasing incidence of women's migration as they undertake distress migration in short cycles of 3-4 days (NIPFP 2009) in order to combine their reproductive roles of care giving to household children, elders and animals as well as fetching and foraging of fodder and fuel wood along with seeking wage work elsewhere. This creates its own stresses and impacts on women's work burden, but is neither adequately recognized nor documented. Recent reports also show defeminization of agriculture meaning that number of women working in agriculture is decreasing presents a major concern, as for the most rural women, employment in agriculture is the last resort.



As against the target of 50% for women's land ownership, the operational land holding for women is 13.9% as per the SDG- India Index and Dashboard 2019-20, published in December 2019. The forest rights claims have also been recognized women's rights at a much lower rate but data for the same is lacking. However, since the land is recorded primary ownership with men in most cases, women's independent ownership remains tenuous. Women farmers are not recognized as one category which has been left behind so far. There are no indicators related to women farmers except their land ownership in SDG Index by NITI Aayog.

Women farmers have unequal access to resources; their mobility is limited due to socio cultural constraints; so is their access to technology and knowledge. Their reproductive roles and domestic roles confine them to tedious and non-remunerative tasks and deny them the resources available to men farmers. Their invisible yet essential work in the farming system provides them with a deep and grounded experience and knowledge of farming activities such as soil management and fodder and seed quality. Their knowledge and vision for farming is not reflected



or adopted in the policy formulations of governments. This gender perspective needs to be brought in the acts, policies, schemes and statistical data. Women are denied recognition as conservers and nurturers of forests, even though they have traditionally been the ones most engaged in tasks of forest management and eco regenerations well as in the maintenance of ecosystems while extracting foods and fruits and herbs and non-timber forest produce for their use.

Masculinist technological innovations and new knowledge systems have also posed a double-edged sword for women farmers. While technology applications have reduced labour requirements, they have displaced women from labour opportunities; technological applications for the drudgery and tedious tasks that are women's roles in the gendered division of labour are few and far between and receive little investment. Technology choices have also shortchanged women and nature in terms of the priority set for enhancing productivity over addressing basic needs and maintaining ecological balance.

Even though entire women farmers community can be considered as left behind group; some sections among women farmers such as widows of farmers who have committed suicide, and women farmers undergoing mass hysterectomy in Marathwada needs most urgent attention to ensure they are also stakeholders in world's movement towards the SDGs and eradication of poverty and hunger, and in ensuring planets sustainability.



BEST PRACTICES

Maharashtra and Odisha have reduced stamp duties where the land ownership is registered under womens name. Maharashtra has a nominal stamp duty of INR 200/-for both gift deeds as well as land partition within family members, whereas Gujarat has reduced it to Rs.100/- . However, it presently includes transactions between husband and wife, brother and sister so it could be used both by brothers and husbands to force their sisters and wives to gift or partition their lands at nominal stamp duty. Maharashtra government has also brought out two Government Resolutions (GRs), one on women farmers from suicide affected households, and the other addressing mass hysterectomies issue in Marathwada are laudable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide incentives within the procedural acts such as the Stamp Registration Act to guarantee minimal registration costs in cases where husbands are either gifting a part of their share to their wives or asking for land partitions in their wives' names (like in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh).
- Provide disincentives for registering release deeds made by women in favour of men.
- Put in place monitoring indicators specific to women farmers in the farming, forest and pastoralist and fisheries sectoral groups – to capture changes in ownership, access, income, capacities and representation and leadership.
- Bring in women farmers' knowledge and vision on farming, seed conservation and management, and in forestry and horticulture in policies and programmes.



- Give priority to women farmers in doubling farmer's income.
- Make collection of gender disaggregated data for land ownership mandatory under digitisation of land records.

- Ensure issue of joint-titles compulsorily in all land grant programs, including the rights recognized under Forest Rights Act, 2006. Make insertion of name of daughter/widowed wife during mutation and/or resurvey and settlement mandatory.
- Set up Fast track courts to settle claims on private property by widows, especially so in farm suicide affected states in the country.
- Delink land ownership from "Farmer" definition and create an alternative farmer registration system for increasing access of women farmers to government schemes and services.

- Allocate separate budget to set up Women's Land and productive resource centres (Women Farmers' Guidance centres/Women's Resource Centres) at the block level to provide support to ensure implementation of the succession laws and access to entitlements around productive resources for women farmers.
- Equip all these WRCs technologically to maintain data base of all the property related cases that are received by them to be able to monitor the progress with regards to claims settled, apart from supporting women farmers to access government schemes.
- Ensure that all registered FPOs have at least 50% membership of women farmers including that in the governance structure.
- Mandate WCD and DOLR to monitor the progress of implementation of succession laws and put out the data in public domain down to the Gram Panchayat and ward level.

LANDLESS FARMERS

The Census of India, 2011 shows that amongst agricultural workers in India, the number of Cultivators has dipped by 8.6 million in the past decade, while the number of Agricultural Labourers increased by 37 million persons. Of the total people employed in agriculture (263 million), more than half of them are agricultural labourers, a trend observed for the first time in four decades. The Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011 put the households with no land at 56.41% of the total rural households in India. With the mean household size of 4.9 in rural India, the number of landless comes to 494.9 million. The Committee on State Agrarian Relations and Unfinished Task of Land Reforms pointed out that landlessness had witnessed a phenomenal rise from about 40 percent in 1991 to about 52 percent in 2004-05. Landlessness has also been increasing due to increasing land acquisition for development projects. The land alienation among the SCs and STs, whose land rights have been protected in various statutes is on the increase despite the laws, and recent data is not available on the same.



Lack of access to, and ownership of land is the central reason for the vulnerability of landless farmers, which keeps them away from accessing and availing benefits meant for Farmers, including input and extension support. There has been a consistent loss of farm employment due to increasing mechanization and technologies like herbicides. This has affected poor women more than men in terms of loss in employment. Recent changes in the Labour Code threaten any meagre protection and social security that exists for such women, with withdrawal of government responsibility for the same.

Lack of off-farm employment opportunities and declining real wage rates present significant challenges to earning a decent livelihood. MGNREGS is the only source of employment for landless farmers in rural India and there is no significant improvement in the MGNREGS since the last five years as regards the number of days of work provided (national average being less than 50 days per household) or increase in the wages. The implementation of the land reform laws and Acts like PESA and FRA, which could have protected and enhanced their access to land and minor forest produce is far from effective. The importance of Common Property Resources cannot be overstated, in the case of landless farmers. However, such commons are shrinking and a draft land reforms policy that would have committed the management of such commons to rural women's collectives has remain unadopted by the government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement effectively the Minimum Wages Act, Equal Remuneration Act and other such labour acts. Ensure that the Labour Code being revised does not dilute social security provisions for poor landless farmers in any way, and that the onus for this remains on the State.
- There should be no dilution of LARR 2013.
- Ensure effective implementation of FRA and PESA.
- Implement the Draft National Land Reforms Policy 2013.



- Prioritize women, dalits, adivasis, nomadic farmers in public land distribution and women in the selected households should be made into title-holders of such land.

- Provide employment for at least 200 days instead of 100 days under MGNREGA in addition to enhancing wage rates to keep up with inflation.
- Provide education, health, water and affordable transportation.

- Create a land reforms cell in the NITI Aayog to work closely with the Department of Land Resources, Land Revenue Departments of the state governments, Tribal Affairs Ministry and other relevant departments for effective implementation of Draft National Land Reforms Policy 2013.

BEST PRACTICES

The central government has increased the number of days work under the MGNREGA in drought affected and natural calamity affected districts and for the Scheduled Tribe households in the forest areas. Some of the states have increased the guarantee of work under the MGNREGA above 100 days, which is a welcome step.

LIVESTOCK FARMERS AND PASTORALISTS

Livestock plays an important role in Indian economy. About 20.5 million people depend upon livestock for their livelihood. Livestock provides livelihood to two-third of rural community. It also provides employment to about 8.8 % of the population in India. India has vast livestock resources. Livestock sector contributes 4.11% GDP and 25.6% of total agriculture GDP. The vast majority of these livestock farmers produce milk (India is the largest milk producer country in the world), meat and other products without using much external input in a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable manner. Distribution of livestock is more equitable than distribution of land. More than three-fourths of the labour demand in livestock production is met by women. However, livestock farmers/herders face multiple disadvantages in the form of lack of infrastructure facilities in rural areas like veterinary clinics and breeding centres, fodder and water, focus on exotic breed, decreasing pastures, and lack of institutional credit and insurance coverage. Climate change impacts on livestock are discouraging farmers from keeping livestock. Only 1 % of the total agriculture budget is allocated for development of the livestock sector.



Pastoral communities which are one of the major livestock keepers face special disadvantages. There has been little progress towards recognition of rights of the pastoral communities. Semi-arid savannah grasslands (SSGs) which cover nearly a fifth of the geographical surface area of India are not only a vital life-giving source of the mobile pastoralism and transhumance but also home to precious and unique biological diversity of the country. They are in peril due to their categorization as “wastelands” in official government policy. About 20 million hectares of SSGs, have been diverted to other land uses, such as agriculture and plantations. In addition, grasslands are neither managed by the forest department nor the agricultural department. The veterinary department which is concerned with the livestock does not focus on the very habitats on which the livestock depends, as their focus is mainly on sedentary, stall fed system. There had been more than 50 percent decline in the area of commons and grazing pasture lands in India which are quintessential for mobile pastoralism.

As a result of the policy incentives and disincentives; while the population of the total exotic/crossbred cattle has increased by 26.9 % in 2019; there is a decline of 6 % in the total indigenous (both descript and non-descript) cattle population over the previous census. The increase in the number of exotic/crossbreed cattle and milch cattle is the reflection of the Animal Husbandry Department's focus on promotion of artificial insemination with exotic breeds and increase of milk production, which benefits only the elite settled farmers, but not the pastoralists. The rapid spread of invasive species such as *Prosopis juliflora*, a result of the governments' myopic interventions has proved fatal to sensitive grassland ecosystems like the Banni, pastoralists of Banni and their livestock. Pastoral sheep wool production has been showing a negative growth trend since 2015. The growth rate of pastoral wool had been -7.59, -6.62, -17.86, and -11.54, in Rajasthan, Karnataka, Jammu and Kashmir, and Gujarat respectively, which are the top five wool producing state of the country. The wool industry has the potential to create an additional 5 million direct jobs and 7 million additional jobs in the allied sectors.

BEST PRACTICES

The government of India recognizes the pastoral communities as “Nomadic Tribes”, but does not acknowledge them as a separate / unique entity like farmers. On February 1, 2019, the Union Minister has announced the creation of a separate welfare development board for de-notified (DNT), nomadic (NT) and semi-nomadic (SNT) tribes of India. The board will be created under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) which will design special strategies and programmes for these communities. The government is also going to set up a committee under the NITI Aayog to complete the task of identifying DNT, SNT and NT communities that are not yet formally classified.”

A study had been conducted by the Center for Pastoralism an NGO based in New Delhi and the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, on tracking pastoralists using the Adhaar Card. This is perhaps a small but important survey for collection of disaggregated data related to mobile pastoralists in the country.

In recognition of the grazing rights of the pastoral communities in forest governance, few exceptions are the CFR claim filed by Maldharis in the Banni grasslands in the Kutch region of Gujarat, and claims filed by pastoral groups in Himachal Pradesh, but both of them are pending.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Acknowledge the indigenous knowledge of the pastoral communities and the economic, ecological and environmental contributions of mobile pastoralism and transhumance at the policy level through research and documentation.
- Conduct studies on the issues related to pastoral women.
- Acknowledge the customary grazing rights of pastoral communities over grasslands, alpine meadows and forests across the country.

- Recognize grasslands as unique habitats.
- Conduct mapping and design programmes and policies for holistic development of CPRs and grasslands.
- Discourage artificial insemination of indigenous livestock breeds with exotic/crossbreeds, and instead characterize, register and take measures to improve indigenous breeds which are resilient to climate change.



- Collect and publish data disaggregating livestock farmers across small ruminants, sheep, large bovines, poultry and fishers.

- Extend MGNREGA to the livestock keepers.
- Integrate the need of water for livestock in the watershed development projects especially in the rainfed areas of the country.
- Develop a national fodder policy and states' fodder policies and design mechanisms for fodder production on commons, cultivable fallows and forest lands.
- Create new markets for livestock products – CSOs working with Raikas of Rajasthan and Gujarat has created new markets for camel milk by changing the policy and getting the approval of the FSSAI.

- Promote technological innovation to improve the efficiency of draught power.
- Allocate sufficient financial and human resource investments, in addition with research and development, technological innovation and infrastructure development to revive the domestic wool industry.
- Significantly increase the budget allocation for the livestock sector.
- Initiate community-based participatory approaches for fodder development with the support of forest and revenue departments in every state.

ADIVASI FARMERS

104 million of the world's estimated 370 indigenous /tribal people live in India. According to the 2011 census, the population of Adivasis in the country is 10.43 crores, constituting 8.6% of the total population. 89.97% of them live in rural areas. India's tribal population is over-dependent on agriculture and forest-related livelihood sources. While 43 per cent of non-tribals depend on agriculture, 66 per cent of the tribal population survives on these primary sector livelihood sources. However forest and agriculture are not just sources of livelihood for adivasis but they are an integral part of their existence. But in recent decades, the number of tribal farmers is coming down, and more are becoming agricultural labourers. In the past decade, 3.5 million tribals have quit farming and other related activities mostly due to eviction from their land and forest. Between 2001 and 2011 census reports, the number of tribal cultivators reduced by 10 per cent while number of agricultural labourers increased by 9 per cent. (DTE, NOV 2018).



All of the 17 goals are relevant for adivasi /indigenous peoples, but only 4 out of 230 indicators specifically mention indigenous peoples. These few indicators on which indigenous peoples are included do not reflect Indigenous definitions of well-being. For indigenous peoples around the world, 'leaving no one behind' means respecting subsistence economies and promoting non-monetary measures of well-being (IPMG, 2016).

The land loss and dispossession have been a significant feature of Adivasi livelihoods in the last two decades as per National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) surveys including the 66th Round (2009–10), 68th Round (2011–12) and 69th Round (2012). Data shows that the proportion of rural Adivasi households that do not own any land – not even homestead land – increased from 16 per cent of all Adivasi households in 1987–88 to 24 per cent in 2011–12. Common property resources, which are very important to the livelihoods and survival of Adivasis, are an important part of wealth that has been lost by Adivasi households. The loss of these resources does not show up in government statistics. Although numerically only about 8.6 per cent, they disproportionately represent the people living below the poverty line, and suffer from extremely poor physical health. Jharkhand and Odisha have highest percentages of tribal people living below the poverty line (from 50% to well above 75%). In 2006, the passage of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act (hereafter FRA) tried to make amends by recognising customary rights of forest dwellers, including the right over common areas and the right to manage and sell forest produce. However, the overall implementation of FRA suffers from inadequate community awareness, conflicting legislations, lack

of dedicated structure for implementation and devoted staff, administrative roadblocks to smooth processing of claims, and governance deficit.

The agriculture of the tribals reflects the principles and practices of agroecology. They use agricultural biodiversity ('cultivated' and 'wild') to meet their food and livelihood security. Their genetic mixtures not only bring greater yield stability and local adaptations to a climate change, but it also contributes to dietary diversity. However, in recent years the traditional self-reliant bio-diverse agriculture of tribals has been encountering threats from various external circumstances. The implementation of green revolution model of agriculture in the name of modernization is characterized by unwanted imposition of alien agricultural technology, replacement of traditional by 'high yielding', hybrid varieties of seeds and extensive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, increase of land under cash crops, and growth of commercial mono-cultural plantations, which has endangered the farms and forests of the Adivasis.



BEST PRACTICES

The aspirational districts programme has a significant overlap with Adivasi districts, the data sets being collected can be extended to have data specifically related to adivasi farmers.

State governments such as Odisha and now AP and MP are developing policies around millet which is largely grown by Adivasi farmers.

Watershed programmes in Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra has been helpful in providing irrigation potential in some of the predominantly adivasi districts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Lay down an exclusive policy dedicated to Adivasi farmers.
- Recognize people and food cultures intrinsically linked to the forests.
- Acknowledge the symbiotic relationship between tribals and forests as laid down in the National Forest Policy, 1988 and the proposed National Tribal Policy as many of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) listed in the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 are forest-based.
- Recognize the socio-economic benefits of forests, its multifunctionality and forest ecosystem in its entirety. Consider forests not only as genetic 'resources', but appreciate its vital role as provider of food and its role in growing food, such as the bees for pollination, and earthworms for regenerating soil fertility.

- Recognise low consumptive and ecologically re-generative lifestyles of adivasi people and appreciate their world view.
- Ensure contribution and participation of indigenous peoples in the development of national action plans, follow-up and review at all levels, including for the voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum.



- Guarantee MSP for produces of Adivasi farmers.
- Conduct research to understand the effectiveness of traditional agriculture of Adivasi communities in the context of climate crisis.

- Implement the 2030 Agenda with full respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples including protecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples, as reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Make indigenous peoples visible in data and in the review of the 2030 Agenda.
- Identify and include the Indicators relevant for indigenous peoples in national and global indicators framework.
- Provide disaggregated data as well as integration of community-based data from indigenous communities for better assessment of progress of indigenous peoples.

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ASHA

Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture or ASHA-Kisan Swaraj network is a large informal network of organisations and individuals that initially came together in 2010 to organise a Kisan Swaraj Yatra, a nation-wide mobilisation to draw attention to issues pertaining to our **FOOD, FARMERS, FREEDOM**. ASHA works with a mission to strengthen sustainable agricultural livelihoods and food diversity/safety/nutrition by re-orienting policies, practices and public consciousness, towards a holistic vision of social, environmental and economic justice as described in the Kisan Swaraj Neeti. It is a network that enables, and draws upon synergies of collective wisdom and action, based on mutual trust and respect.



CECOEDECON

The **Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society (CECOEDECON)** is one of Rajasthan's leading civil society organizations. It's early footprints in the area of disaster relief have eventually progressed into imprinting its presence in more than 15 districts across the states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. For over three decades the organization has worked towards promoting Inclusion, making Communities Resilient, Empowering Women, Children, Farmers and others at the society's margins including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes through its innovative interventions ranging from Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods, Climate Change, Fair Trade, Institution Development, Seed Sovereignty, Land Rights, health, nutrition, Education and Human Rights.



MAUSAM

Movement for Advancing Understanding on Sustainability And Mutuality (MAUSAM) is a coalition of more than 40 organizations and networks working on the issues of sustainable development, environment, sustainable agriculture etc. We have been extensively engaged with India's response to Climate Crises, Domestic Action and its position in International negotiation process under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We Have tried to attract global attention on due consideration of agriculture and food security in climate change negotiations, state responsibility and accountability for climate justice.

Organizations and networks part of the MAUSAM bring with them varying experiences and expertise ranging from grassroots works with farmers and peasant communities to engaging with policy makers and the polity through policy analysis, advocacy and lobbying, engaging with the media through the sensitization and orientation; and undertaking documentation and scientific exploration in climate change, sustainable agriculture and food security. The focus of the work emanates from the understanding that there is an urgency to work in a collaborative action on climate change and climate justice issues. The collective purpose is to address these issues through a variety of actions at local, state/provincial, national and global levels.



PAIRVI

Public Advocacy Initiatives for Rights and Values in India (PAIRVI) is a capacity building and advocacy support organization working at the intersections of rights, development and sustainability. It works with small grassroots organizations and community based groups to enhance their understanding on development discourse and capacity to respond appropriately. PAIRVI also works with a pan Indian Coalition on climate and environmental justice, MAUSAM (Movement for Advancing Understanding on Sustainability And Mutuality).



Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (Don't break your promise) is a national campaign of 3500 CSOs to hold the government accountable for its promise to end Poverty, Social Exclusion & Discrimination. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan emerged from the consensus among human rights activists and social action groups who were part of the World Social Forum 2004 (Mumbai), aimed to create an environment through forceful, focused and concerted effort and try to make a difference in India where one-fourth of the world poor exist and they continuously experience intense deprivation from opportunities to learn, live and work in dignity.