

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. -674

TO BE ANSWERED ON 08/12/2023

ACCESS TO MECHANISED FARM TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

674 Shri Sandosh Kumar P:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of farmers having access to mechanised farm tools and equipments in the country;
- (b) whether the lack of access to mechanised tools and equipment has affected farm productivity and income of farmers;
- (c) whether Ministry has any specific measures to provide mechanised farm tools and equipment to poor farmers;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether Ministry has initiated the setting up of farm tools and equipment libraries in rural areas?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) to (e): The adoption of mechanization by the farmers depends on various factors such as socio-economic conditions, geographical conditions, crops grown, irrigation facilities etc. The Government has not carried out assessment of number of farmers that have access to the mechanized tools and equipment in the country. However, farm mechanization levels assessed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for major cereals, pulses, oilseeds, millets and cash crops indicates that the seedbed preparation operation is highly mechanized (more than 70%) for major crops whereas, harvesting and threshing operation is the least mechanized (lower than 32%) for major crops except for rice and wheat crops. In seedbed preparation, mechanization level is higher in rice and wheat crops as compared to the other crops. However, mechanization level for sowing operation is the highest for wheat crop (65%). The mechanization levels in planting/transplanting operation for sugarcane and rice crops are 25% and 35%, respectively. In case of harvesting and threshing, the mechanization levels in rice and wheat crops are more than 60% and very less in cotton crop.

The emphasis of the Government is always to promote mechanization for all section of the society with the aim of increasing the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to the regions where availability of farm power is low and promoting 'Custom Hiring Centers' to offset the adverse economies of scale

arising due to small land holding and high cost of individual ownership. A Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization' (SMAM) is being implemented through the State Governments w.e.f. 2014-15. Under this scheme, financial assistance @ 40% to 50% of the cost of machines depending on the categories of farmers, is provided for purchase of agricultural machines. Financial assistance @ 40% of the project cost is also provided to rural entrepreneur, (Rural youth and farmer as an entrepreneur), Cooperative Societies of Farmers, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Registered Farmers Societies, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Panchayats for establishment of Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs) and Hi-tech hubs of high value agricultural machines. Financial assistance @ 80% of the project cost for the projects costing up to Rs. 10 lakhs is provided to the Cooperative Societies of farmers, Registered Farmer Societies, SHGs, FPOs and Panchayats for setting up of village level Farm Machinery Banks (FMBs). The rate of financial assistance for the North Eastern States for establishment of FMBs is @ 95% of the project cost for the projects costing up to Rs. 10 lakhs. The major focus of the scheme is towards expanding the network for Custom Hiring Services of agricultural machines and equipments to increase utilization of farm power and ensuring availability of farm equipment and machines for small farms. Since inception of the scheme, more than 15.55 lakh machines and equipments have been provided to the farmers on individual ownership basis and more than 44,000 CHCs/Hi-tech Hubs/FMBs have been established in various States.

The Government has also recently approved Central Sector Scheme for providing drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores. The scheme aims to provide drones to 15000 selected Women SHGs for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purpose (application of fertilizers and pesticides). Of the total 15,000 drones, first 500 drones will be procured by Lead Fertilizer Companies (LFCs) in 2023-24, using their internal resources for distribution to selected SHGs. Remaining 14500 drones will be provided under this scheme during 2024-25 and 2025-26 and Central Financial Assistance @ 80% of the cost of drone and accessories/ancillary charges up to a maximum of Rs. 8.0 lakhs will be provided to the women SHGs for purchase of drones. The Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) of SHGs may raise the balance amount (total cost of procurement minus subsidy) as loan under National Agriculture Infra Financing Facility (AIF). Interest subvention @ 3% on the AIF loan will be provided to the CLFs. The scheme will help in infusing advance technology in agriculture for improved efficiency, enhanced crop yield and reduced cost of operation for the benefit of farmers. The scheme will also provide sustainable business and livelihood support to SHGs and they would be able to earn additional income of at least Rs. 1.0 lakhs per annum.
