

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COOPERATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1032
ANSWERED ON 04/12/2024

Participation of rural women in Cooperatives

1032 Shri Golla Baburao:

Will the Minister of COOPERATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of women led cooperatives present in the country;
- (b) the initiatives implemented by Government to promote the participation of women in cooperatives;
- (c) whether any study has been conducted to assess the impact of these initiatives on the empowerment of rural women; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF COOPERATION
(SHRI AMIT SHAH)

(a) As per National Cooperative Database, as on 28.11.2024, there are 25,385 Women Welfare Cooperative Society (WWCS) are registered in the country. Further, there are 1,44,396 dairy cooperatives in the country where a large number of rural women are engaged in the sector.

(b) to (d) The government has taken various initiatives to promote the participation of women in cooperatives. The details of the same are as under:

(i) Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002 was amended through MSCS (Amendment) Act, 2023 wherein, a specific provision has been introduced for reservation of two seats for women in the Board of MSCS has been made mandatory paving the way for gender equal growth in Co-operative Sector.

(ii) Model Bye Laws for the PACS has been prepared by the Ministry of Cooperation and adopted by the States/UTs across the country. It mandates requirement of women Directors in the Board of PACS. This is ensuring representation of women and their decision making in more than 1 Lakh PACS.

(iii) National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), a statutory corporation under the administrative control of Ministry of Cooperation, has been playing a significant role over the years to improve socio-economic status of women cooperatives enabling them to take up business model based activities. NCDC is implementing the following schemes exclusively for women cooperatives:

A. Swayam Shakti Shahakar Yojna – Under this scheme working capital loan for upto 3 years is provided to women Self Help Groups(SHG) for facilitating adequate bank credit to women SHGs to undertake common/collective socio-economic activities.

B. Nandini Sahakar – Under this scheme, term loan is provided to women cooperatives for a period of 5-8 years with the interest subvention of upto 2% on term loan. The financial assistance under the scheme is provided for business plan based activity /service mandated to NCDC.

Further, the Ministry of Cooperation, in collaboration with NABARD, NDDDB, NFDB, and State Governments, is actively working to strengthen the cooperative movement in India. This includes establishing new Multipurpose PACS, Dairy, and Fishery Cooperative Societies in all Panchayats/villages. To ensure effective implementation, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been launched. NDDDB is tasked with forming/strengthening over 1,03,000 dairy cooperative societies. Additionally, the "Cooperation Among Cooperatives" pilot project in Gujarat aims to empower primary Dairy Cooperative Societies by making them Business Correspondents/Bank Mitras and providing members with Rupay KCC. This initiative, by involving a significant number of rural women in dairy cooperatives, aims to enhance their market access and contribute to their financial and social empowerment.

(c) and (d) Under the MSCS (Amendment) Act, 2023 cooperative election authority has been established and it has conducted 70 elections of Multi-State Cooperatives and ensured the participation of women in the Board.

NCDC as on 31.03.2024, has sanctioned and disbursed cumulative financial assistance of Rs.7,708.09 crore and Rs.6,426.36 crore respectively for the development of cooperative societies exclusively promoted by women.

The Government of India has implemented a pilot project named "Cooperation Among Cooperatives", in Panchmahal and Banaskatha districts of the State of Gujarat, under which, primary Dairy Cooperative Societies are made Business Correspondent/ Bank Mitras of District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs) and members are provided with Micro-ATMs. Further, members of dairy cooperatives (especially women members) are being provided Rupay KCC by DCCBs, to meet their immediate financial needs. During the pilot project, DCCBs in both the districts have issued 22,344 Rupay KCC to their members including 6,382 Animal Husbandry KCC benefitting mostly the women. Further, Ministry has not conducted specific study for impact of these initiatives on the empowerment of rural women.
