

Multi-Level approach to bring Gender Equality in Rural India

A mKRISHI® Story



Promoting Self-reliance
and
Independence through
Entrepreneurship development
and
bringing access to
Information and market
through ICT

Overview

Background



- Society (and its practices) are formed over million of years and bringing a change takes time.
- Gender equality had always remain a concern. It's especially tough in Rural areas.
- Division of labor is very clear – men work outside and are considered bread-earner; women are homemaker and take care of the families. Source of information always remained “male”.
- But mobility has brought a change – information is accessible and hence, people want a change.
- But changing the “beliefs” and “culture” is not easy. Still in some places “educating women” or “women as bread-earner” is not considered good!
- TCS Rural Digital Service Delivery Platform – mKRISHI® started a change called “connecting” the rural population to the “islands of knowledge”. And in this process, it also brought the “women” of the families also in the loop. Technology does not distinguish and hence, it become popular. We are sharing case studies of the success.
- Major emphasis remained on:

**Mindset
Change**

(through Awareness)

**Improve
Accessibility**

(through ICT)

**Develop
Livelihood**

(through small scale
Entrepreneurship)

ICT is Bridge – but all three aspects are required to bring this change.

Warud: Power of “Self-Reliance” – Women Entrepreneurship

Warud (Maharashtra) – Central Eastern India

- Warud is part of drought prone Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, which is known as “Farmer Suicide Capital” of India.
- TCS participate in the IFAD driven “Convergence of Agriculture Intervention In Maharashtra (CAIM)” to - assess the needs of the region, to formulate a “framework” of “inclusive government and citizen” co-operation and promote alternate livelihood as an “insurance to crop failure’.
- TCS combined it’s “Process consulting” and “ICT” power to bring a change in the 15 villages in Warud.
- Women are educated upto 12th class till graduation.

Interventions

- Inclusion of the “village women” in Project Rural Appraisal, Village Development Committee, Village Workshop (Gram Sabha).
- Study of Government’s Women Empowerment Schemes and formation of all women Self Help Group (SHG).
- Linking with the credit institution and access to loan.
- Development of a business plan for setting up a Pigeon-Pea (Dal) processing machine and Spark units (for farm cultivations).
- Procurement of the machine and starting up the business .
- Alternate livelihood brought additional income to the family and self-reliance to the women. ICT to spread the service info.



***My Machine –
Source of my
Livelihood and
Independence
– Usha Tai***

Dhar: Power of Group and Crop value addition for livelihood

Dhar (M.P.) – Central India

- Dhar is a drought prone area with majority of the population below poverty line. The soil is good for the horticulture crop. But the water availability is a big problem.
- Villages are far-off from any major market, schools or hospitals.
- Women are less are not educated, but are passionate to do more than regular chores of home.
- Due to family encouragement they tend to do simpler works like sewing, handloom, embroidery, artisan work, etc.
- Chilli and turmeric produce is of good quality.
- Women formed a self-help group to process the Chilli and Turmeric produce from the produce.

Interventions

- mKRISHI® provided a mobile app and IVR services to support them to ask their agriculture problem related queries.
- Helped SHG develop a business model around the food processing.
- Developed smaller quantity packages and branding materials.
- Connected with the major stores in cities 100KM from the region to try the produce.
- Good, Organic quality, helped increase the demand of the produce.
- ICT service helped connect them with the consumer.



SHG Women putting dry Chilli in Blending Machine

Mewat: Mindset change and Inclusion

Mewat (Haryana) – Northern India

- Though only 60KM from National capital region, socially backward area. Traditionally an agrarian district but now climatically vulnerable due to frequent drought and dwindling water table.
- With sex ratio of 907 females per 1000 males, women are not much educated and are mainly homemaker. Water scarcity, health hygiene issues, child nourishment in the time s of famine and mother nourishment are major issues.
- In some villages, women are involved in post harvesting operations on grain.
- Mindset is conservative and male to female interaction is not encouraged, especially anyone not from immediate family.

Interventions

- Organization of a Women Workshop on Climate change awareness - **first time in the history of this region.**
- **Objective:** To spread awareness about the changes and research progress.
- Case studies discussed, observations and the views shared, adaptation techniques discussed. ICT based services shared.
- **Benefit:** Women play a very crucial role in discussing Adaptation technique at home and encourage husband. Also, they are the first teacher of the children and hence bringing a behavioral change at home is very crucial. Changes propagated: water conservation, soil pollution, bio-fertilizer, effects of deforestation.



