

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU SCHEMES AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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INTRODUCTION

It was recognised that the main obstacles to empowerment has been the low level of educational attainments as well as poverty among women. Taking into account this fact, the Government of Tamil Nadu have framed various policies, designed specific interventions and implemented many programmes to eradicate poverty and to provide education to the empowerment of women in Tamil nadu .

EDUCATION OF WOMEN

Education to women is the most powerful instrument of changing their position in the society. Education also brings about reduction in inequalities and also acts as a means to improve their status within the family. In order to encourage education of women at all levels and to dilute gender bias in the provision and acquaintance of education, schools, colleges and even universities were established exclusively for women in the State. To bring more girl children, especially from marginalized BPL families, into the main stream of education, Government has been providing a package of concessions in the form of free supply of books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for hostilities, mid-day meals, scholarships, free by-cycles and so on. The Mother Teresa Women University has been established for the development of Women Studies and to encourage higher education among women and their social mobility.

PERIYAR EVR NAGAMMAI SCHEME

Periyar EVR Nagammai Free Education Scheme has been implemented in the State from 1989-90 to women students irrespective of caste, creed and community to encourage their education and to reduce dropout rate. As per the scheme those students' whose parental annual income is less than Rs.24,000/- are exempted from payment of tuition fees in under - graduate courses. During 2005-06, 8936 women students were benefited under this scheme. In 2006-07, a sum of Rs.65.00 lakhs has been allocated for this scheme.

FREE COACHING EXCLUSIVELY FOR WOMEN STUDENTS

To encourage and enable the women students to appear for the IAS/IPS examinations, the Government established two free coaching centers –one at Queen Mary's College, Chennai and the other at Arulmigu Meenakshi Government College for Women, Madurai. In each center, 60 women students are being

given free coaching. During the current year, the government has provided a sum of Rs.1.00 lakh for implementing this scheme.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARENESS PROGRAMME

In order to empower women, Science city has been organising Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) and Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme (EAP) to bring out the talents of women and to make them stand on their own feet. To ascertain the status of women scientists, Science city has embarked upon the task of creating a data-base of women scientists in the entire State of Tamil Nadu. To encourage the women scientists, Science city has instituted Life Time Achievement Award and Young Women Scientist Awards. During 2005, five women scientists were awarded the Young Women Scientists Award.

TAMIL NADU CORPORATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

Tamil Nadu Corporation for development of women was established in 1983 which aims at the socio-economic empowerment of women. As a prelude, the Corporation is implementing the Mahalir Thittam among poor rural women to promote saving habits, nurture entrepreneurial skills and aptitudes, promote exposure to banking transactions and to free them from the clutches of local moneylenders. The scheme is being implemented in partnership with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Banks. Under the scheme, SHGs are formed and monitored through NGOs affiliated with the Tamil Nadu Corporations for Development of Women, Ltd

SELF HELP GROUPS

Self Help Groups are small homogenous groups consisting of 12-20 women from BPL families voluntarily organised to promote savings. They are self-managed groups of poor women which primarily came into existence to mobilise financial resources through their own savings and lend the same amongst themselves to meet the credit needs of their members. The specific objectives of SHGs are to: improve saving habits among women; increase the total family income; fulfill the economic needs through self-employment of women; utilise bank loan and government welfare schemes, help the members to escape from the clutches of moneylenders; and mobilise financial resources.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND SKILL FORMATION

In order to improve the entrepreneurial ability and skill of the women, Government has been imparting various types of training designed to promote self and wage employment.

SKILL UP-GRADATION TRAINING PROGRAMME

Provision of skill training to women in SHG has been given recognition so as to enable them to start their own income generating activities. The duration of the training and the cost depends on the nature of the trade selected by the members. Till March 2006, 60957 women have been provided skill training. The Government have proposed to train another 23000 women in 2006-07. Entrepreneurship Development Training Programme for Women (EDP)

EDP training is conducted by TNCDW to expose the SHG women to various business opportunities and to motivate them to start economic activities. Up to March 2006, the Corporation has trained 6,34,991 women in co-ordination with other Government departments such as Rural Development, Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, Backward Classes, TAHDCO, Slum Clearance Board, etc. In 2006-07, 22000 more SHG women will be provided EDP Training by TNCDW.

CONCLUSION

Despite of the enactment of a lot of social legislations for women lagged behind men in different spheres. In order to improve the women's social status in the society State Government of Tamil Nadu introduced more number of progressive measures. Tamil Nadu government stands first in implementing various welfare programmes for the overall development of women. Since women are the significant contributors for the growing economy, the State has been implementing variety of welfare programmes namely granting of financial assistance to children and women in difficult circumstances to pursue education, marriage and widow remarriage and also providing healthy and protective environment to them. The progressive measures of the Government for the social empowerment of women can be analyzed under three main headings like Women Welfare Measures, Health and Educational improvement of women and Provision of employment opportunities to them.

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