Agri-Entrepreneurship
Challenges and Opportunities

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ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR OFF-FARM ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

Renu Jethi, Pratibha Joshi, Ankita Kandpal and Poonam Kashyap

1. INTRODUCTION

Agricultural sector alone is incapable of creating additional employment opportunities in the wake of increasing population, limited land resources and climate change. As a result, the impetus for achieving sustained development in rural areas has to focus on expanding the base off-farm activities. Many studies reported that income from rural off-farm enterprises greatly exceeded the value of farm wage income (Reardon et al., 2007). If such activities are encouraged and comprehensive planning approach can be evolved it could provide the solution to the problems of rural areas such as poverty, unemployment and out-migration of the rural work force. Obinna (2014) described off-farm activities to constitute of all the income generating activities that a farmer embarks on in addition to farming. Off- farm activities contribute to household food security by providing cash for food and other household purchases and equally, in agricultural assets acquisition. Babatunde et al (2010) also, reported that off- farm activities are risks minimizing strategies that safeguarded farmers against crop and market failures. Economic status of women is very weak and pathetic in rural areas of India and opportunities of earning are very less and risky. In this scenario, off farm entrepreneurship activities through formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) can paved the way for economic independence of rural women (Sharma et al. 2012).