

Gender Differences in Empowerment in Agriculture: The Tripura Scenario

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Abstract—Women and men have different roles, responsibilities and relations in agricultural production systems which vary from place to place and society to society. Women, despite their active contribution, are often not given due recognition and counter various constraints. In Tripura state of north east India, women, especially the tribal, are reported to be better placed as compared to rest of the country. The present study was initiated to understand the gender differences in empowerment in farming households in Charilam block of Sepahijala district of Tripura. Three tribal and three non-tribal villages were selected randomly for the study. From each village, ten households were selected randomly and from each household the primary woman and man member was interviewed. The tool used for measuring empowerment was the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) developed collaboratively by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). Overall result indicated that men had higher empowerment in agriculture index (0.893) than women (0.879). But interestingly, in the tribal villages the empowerment index was higher for women (0.918) than men (0.881). Social category is found to be a major determinant of level of empowerment while education was found to have positive and significant impact on household gender parity. For both genders, empowerment in work load and access to & decision about credit was found to be very low. For women attention is needed in creating avenues and empowering them for public speaking. Majority of women reported household drudgery, stringent traditional taboos & restriction, balancing farm & home and lack of gender friendly equipments as major problems. As for men, important problem was demanding family members.

Keywords: Gender, agricultural empowerment, Tripura, gender parity, tribal women.