



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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“INDIA HAS SHIFTED TO WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT”

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs,” and the topic details the role of women and women led development.

Syllabus mapping: GS-1:Indian Society: Role of women and women’s organization, Social empowerment.

GS-2:Social Justice: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

For Prelims: How the women labour force participation in India is changing.

For Mains: What is meant by women led development and how it is helping for overall social empowerment.

Why In News: Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran mentioned that India is transitioning from women’s development to women-led development.

What is women’s development vs women led development:

Women’s development: Women’s development primarily focuses on improving the overall status and well-being of women in society.

Goal: The goal of women’s development is to enhance women’s capabilities, opportunities, and quality of life across various dimensions such as education, health, employment, and social participation.

Approach: It often involves interventions and policies that aim to address specific challenges and barriers faced by women, such as gender discrimination, lack of access to education and healthcare, economic disparities, and legal inequalities.

Women led development: Women-led development shifts the focus beyond individual women’s empowerment to the broader impact of women’s leadership on societal development.

Goals: The goal is to foster environments where women actively participate in decision-making processes, hold leadership positions, and influence policies and practices across all sectors of society.

Approach: It emphasizes the importance of women’s leadership in shaping development agendas, policies, and initiatives to ensure they address the needs and priorities of women and promote gender equality.

Factors responsible for the transition from women's development to women led development:

1. **Policy Initiatives:** The Government has introduced numerous policies aimed at enhancing women's participation and leadership across sectors. The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Save the Daughter, Educate the Daughter), the gender budgeting, Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) scheme etc.
2. **Economic Empowerment:** Initiatives like the Stand Up India scheme promote entrepreneurship among women and marginalized communities by providing financial support and facilitating access to loans and markets. Microfinance institutions also play a crucial role in empowering women economically. Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK) for upskilling of rural women.
3. **Political Representation:** The implementation of laws like the 73rd and 74th Amendments has led to increased participation of women in local governance through Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies. Moreover the 106 Constitutional Amendment Act is a milestone in this effort.
4. **Education and Healthcare:** Investments in girls' education, such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, aim to reduce gender disparities in education. Schemes like Janani Suraksha Yojana address maternal health, ensuring safer pregnancies and deliveries.
5. **Social Change and Awareness:** Campaigns against gender-based violence, such as the Nirbhaya Fund and One Stop Centres, provide support services to women in distress. Social movements like #MeTooIndia have highlighted issues of sexual harassment and discrimination.
6. **Technological Inclusion:** Initiatives like Digital India promote digital literacy among women, enhancing their access to information, services, and markets. Women-focused skill development programs prepare them for employment in emerging sectors.
7. **Cultural Shift:** There is a growing recognition of the role of gender equality in sustainable development. Civil society organizations, media campaigns, and cultural movements contribute to challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

Challenges that hinder progress in women-led development:

1. **Gender Discrimination:** Deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes and gender biases continue to restrict women's access to opportunities in education, employment, and leadership roles. India's sex ratio (females per 1000 males) according to the 2011 Census was 940 females per 1000 males.
2. **Violence and Safety Concerns:** Women face various forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, and trafficking. The NCRB data shows In 2020, a total of 3,71,503 cases of crimes against women were reported in India.
3. **Education Disparities:** Factors such as early marriage, lack of infrastructure, and socio-economic constraints contribute to lower enrollment and higher dropout rates among girls. Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for girls in primary education was 94.32% in 2019-20, indicating high enrollment rates but disparities persist; it is 48% in higher education.

4. **Economic Empowerment:** Female labor force participation rate in India was around 23.3% in 2017-18, one of the lowest globally and showing a declining trend from previous years. Women are often concentrated in sectors like agriculture, informal work, and domestic work, where conditions and wages may be poor.
5. **Political Underrepresentation:** While there has been progress in women's representation in local governance, women remain underrepresented in state legislatures and national parliament. In the Seventeenth Lok Sabha women's representation was 14.4% in 2019.
6. **Health and Reproductive Rights:** Women's health, including maternal health and access to reproductive healthcare services, faces challenges due to inadequate infrastructure, cultural taboos, and limited awareness. Issues like maternal mortality and malnutrition disproportionately affect women in marginalized communities.
7. **Digital Divide:** According to the National Sample Survey (NSS) 75th round (2017-18), only 22% of rural women and 44% of urban women aged 15-29 had ever used the internet, compared to 37% of rural men and 67% of urban men in the same age group.

WAY FORWARD:

1. **Education and Skill Development:** Ensure universal access to quality education for girls, this can be done by effective implementation schemes like Skill Development Programs Drone Didi scheme.
2. **Economic Empowerment:** Facilitate access to financial services, credit, and capital for women entrepreneurs through schemes like Stand Up India and targeted microfinance initiatives and SHGs.
3. **Political Participation and Leadership:** As Soon as possible effectively implement the 106 constitutional amendments that will help to increase the representation of women and their role in decision making.
4. **Enforce Gender Equality Laws:** Strengthen implementation and enforcement of laws and policies such as Maternity benefit 1 act 1017, domestic violence prevention Act 2005 and Sexual harassment prevention and controls Act 2013.
5. **Social and Cultural Change:** Conducting awareness campaigns and social mobilization efforts to challenge gender stereotypes, promote positive role models, and foster supportive attitudes towards women's leadership.
6. **Ensure Health Access:** Improve access to healthcare services, including maternal and reproductive health services, to enhance women's health outcomes and well-being. Schemes like Ayushman Bharat would help to make universal health access.
7. **Combat Violence:** Pink police Booth would strengthen efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, ensuring women's safety and security both in public and private spheres. One Stop Centre world helps the women victims of any violence.

Conclusion:

The recent economic survey has acknowledged that India is on the path of women led development. The need is to reduce the hindrances and make the way for women to lead from the front by developing capabilities and skills across the sectors and diverse sections of the women.

Sources: The Hindu/page 5/ 23 July 2024.

<https://epaper.thehindu.com/reader>

Prelims Question:

Q1. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), consider the following statements:

1. The primary objective of the PMMVY is to provide a cash incentive for partial compensation for the wage loss so that the woman can take adequate rest before and after delivery of the first child.
2. The PMMVY Scheme is being implemented as per provisions under Section 4 of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.
3. All pregnant women and lactating mothers in regular employment shall not be entitled to benefits under PMMVY.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: d

Mains Question:

Account for the transition from women's development to women led development in India, also mention challenges and ways to make women led development more feasible?
(250 words 15,marks)

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