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“World Food System —
A Contribution from Europe”

Women Empowerment by Self Help Groups: A Way-in for Education and Nutrition

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Abstract

At the Millennium Summit in September 2000, the international community gathered and adopted UN Millennium Declarations, which popularly are called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Setting out a series of targets with a deadline of 2015, they have become the heart of the global development agenda. Girls' education and overall improvement in women's status contribute significantly in improving the nutritional status of the family. Failing to reach MDG on gender equality and women's empowerment will lead to heavy economic costs. Missing the target for gender parity in primary and secondary education could lower a country's annual per capita growth rate by 0.1-0.3%, which emphasises the degree of its importance for a country. All this clearly emphasises the need for women empowerment to facilitate education and nutrition within the MDGs by a Self Help Groups (SHG) concept. This is presently in boom in developing countries like India, Bangladesh and in Africa with the SHG concept of savings and income generating activities. In India, since two decades women were empowered by SHG microfinance programme, which is renowned as the world's biggest microfinance programme reaching millions of women clients. However, it still has a tremendous potential for a way out to empower rural women. The poster will attempt to picturise the impact and influence of these SHGs on rural women participating in savings and income generating activities and changes in their life after their empowerment.

Keywords: Income generating activities, MDGs, savings, women empowerment