



Report on

Policy Workshop on Engendering FPOs: Past-Present-Future

(Organised by APMAS, MAKAAAM, NABARD Telangana, PRADAN & AgHub)



Venue: APMAS, Manikonda, Hyderabad

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APMAS, Manikonda, Hyderabad

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Policy Workshop on Engendering FPOs: Past-Present-Future

1. Background

In a quest for women farmers affirmation on land and farming, in the year 2017, APMAS and four NGO partners (Accion Fraterna, REDS, GMM and PEACE) partnered together to implement the project, '**Achieving Gender Equality through Empowerment of Women in Agriculture (AGEEWA) with the support of AEIN, Luxembourg**'. The project was implemented during 2017 to 2023 covering 4 Mandals; Dharmavaram & Ananthapuram Rural mandals in Sri Sathya Sai & Ananthapur districts of Andhra Pradesh and Yadagirigutta & Bommalaramaram mandals in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district of Telangana. The main purpose of the AGEEWA project was to reduce gender barriers and empower women to become members, leaders, decision makers and equal players in Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).

An external evaluation was done in 2020 for course corrections. At the end of the project period (Sep-Nov 2023) two studies were commissioned to assess the performance of WFPOs and the level of gender perception among women and men farmers.

A policy paper on '**Engendering FPOs**' has also been prepared based on;

- Experience and learning gained by APMAS in promotion and strengthening of Women led FPOs (WFPOs) and enhancing women's role in mixed FPOs
- Outcome of the two studies commissioned in Oct-Nov 2023
- Experience gained by organisations across the country in promotion and strengthening of WFPOs (SERP Telangana, SERP Andhra Pradesh, Srijan, PRADAN, Grassroots Development Foundation, Access Livelihoods etc)
- Recommendations made by MAKAAAM for engendering guidelines of Scheme 10K FPOs
- Studies conducted by Azim Premji University, NAFPO, Walmart Foundation, etc.

To take the initiative of Gender Mainstreaming in FPOs forward, **APMAS** in collaboration with **NABARD Telangana Regional Office, PRADAN, MAKAAAM, AgHub** and with the support of **AEIN Luxemburg and DGRV Germany**, organized a **National Level Policy Advocacy Workshop** titled "**Engendering FPOs**" on **19 January 2024**, Friday at **APMAS Head Office, Hyderabad, Telangana**. A total of 100 plus diverse stakeholders involved directly in promotion of FPOs, practitioners, researchers, civil society organisations, FPOs and market players participated and shared their inputs, experiences, perspectives and learnings.

The primary purpose of this workshop was to highlight and discuss the gender barriers women farmers face in crop value chain and the FPOs promotion and to explore the possibilities for collaboration among key stakeholders to intensify the endeavour of 'Engendering FPOs' and 'Empowering Women in the value chain'.

The targeted outcomes of the workshop are:

- Government and the implementing organisations come up with the gender sensitive policy guidelines for capacity building in promotion of women's leadership and their

equal participation across all activities of FPOs and implementation of the guidelines in true spirit

- Cluster Based Business Organisations (CBBOs) and Producer Organisation Promoting Institutions (POPIs) promote and strengthen women-led FPOs and ensure minimum 50 percent women as members and leaders in mixed FPOs
- Departments, financial institutions and service providers come forward to invest in enhancing women's knowledge, skills and business opportunities; equal access to resources including credit, tools and technology, and strengthening production systems in view of climate change

2. Inaugural Session

The workshop, titled "**Engendering FPOs: Past-Present-Future,**"

commenced with a prayer song followed by the lamp lighting by key speakers, guests and women farmers. The inaugural address was delivered by Sri CS Reddy, MD & CEO, APMAS. In his opening remarks, he set the stage for the event by underscoring the importance of delving into the past, current, and future dimensions of engendering FPOs. The address aimed to explore the fundamental questions of what, why, and how in the context of empowering and promoting gender inclusivity within FPOs. The support of partners and donors namely: NABARD, PRADAN, MAKAAAM, DGRV, and AEIN Luxembourg was highly appreciated.



Sri CS Reddy further stressed that gender inclusivity should be the topic of discussion as women contribute to 80% of agriculture works, still we have only 3% of registered FPOs as all-women FPOs and in the other mixed FPOs have been observed to be largely male-dominated. Today there are



1.34 crores SHGs comprising 16.2 crore households who are managing over 3.5 lakh crores in livelihood and enterprise activities. The last three decades of SHG movement and learnings from it has clearly stated that women leaders have excelled in financial management, collective activities, business services, marketing, etc. The same can be expected to be replicated in FPOs who will be managed and run by Women leaders (for both all-women FPOs and mixed-FPOs).

Several studies, including APMAS, show women-led FPOs have good governance, improved business activities, higher profitability, and enhanced service delivery to members.

Further women leaders from successful women FPOs in India were invited on the stage to share their experience and set the environment for the workshop. Later, the “Engendering FPOs Manual” developed by APMAS with the support of AEIN Luxemburg was released by all.



3. Setting the Context:

3.1. Engendering FPOs, What? Why? And How?

Ms. Shilpa Vasavada from Mahila Kisan Adhikar Manch (MAKAAM) gave a detailed presentation on "Engendering FPOs: What, Why and How." She highlighted the paradoxical exclusion of women in FPOs, emphasizing the need to address why engendering FPOs is crucial. She emphasized that gender inclusivity benefits not only women but also enhances both men and women-led FPOs. The design of FPOs itself has fundamental issues in not having an inclusive environment for participation of women farmer members.



The presentation highlighted that 80% of agricultural operations are managed by women. Research from Azim Premji University revealed a stark reality - only 3% of registered FPOs in India are women-led, and there is a lack of comprehensive data on FPOs. This contradiction underscores the exclusion of women from FPO activities, leaving them to handle more farm labour, particularly in pre-production tasks, while men dominate market participation, network building, and engagement in the larger ecosystem.

Various studies consistently show the positive impact of women entrepreneurs, with percentage increases ranging from 53.5% to 78.5% to mention one example. These studies emphasize that women entrepreneurs stay in business longer, display strong saving habits, and demonstrate financial prudence, including responsible handling of loans and repayments. These capabilities are attributed to the experiences gained from SHGs.

She also highlighted ongoing national and international initiatives promoting women's active involvement in FPOs, encouraging them to take leadership roles in business operations too. The overarching goal is to acknowledge and leverage the potential of women in the agricultural sector, fostering gender inclusivity and equity.

3.2. Policy Paper: Women FPOs - A pathway For Women's Empowerment in Agriculture

Ms Gouri Krishna, Board Member of APMAS, presented a policy paper titled "Women FPOs - A Pathway for Women's Empowerment in Agriculture." The paper brought attention to critical issues, emphasizing that 80% of women actively participate in economic activities in agriculture, while males often migrate to urban areas for livelihoods. She identified the gaps in policies and schemes targeted at women farmers and their practical implementation on ground.

The presentation highlighted the pivotal role of SHGs as catalysts for women's empowerment, forming the foundation for WFPOs. It discussed the factors enabling the transition from SHGs to WFPOs and provided an overview of the current status of WFPOs, noting that only 3% are registered in the country, as per Azim Premji University findings.

Drawing insights from the AGEewa Project, the presentation identified policy gaps hindering the promotion of WFPOs. It called for attention to various policy issues, such as district-wise targets for WFPOs, promoting a specific percentage of women-led FPOs, encouraging women's active participation, and empowering women through land entitlements, access to finance, market access, and women-friendly agricultural technologies.

The policy paper stressed the need to redefine measurement indicators for WFPOs, mixed FPOs, and men-led FPOs. It emphasized defining the vision of FPOs regarding member participation and governance, signaling a comprehensive approach to foster sustainable and inclusive growth in the agricultural sector.

3.3. Azim Premji University Study Finding – Supporting Women FPCs

Dr. Annapurna Neti from Azim Premji University presented study findings on FPOs, with a focus on women-related aspects. The speaker has been working on research of FPOs in India as part of Azim Premji University academic works. They have already produced two sets of detailed research study on Farmer Producer Companies.

The study reveals that as of March 2021, less than 3% of total Producer Companies (PCs) are registered for women, with the majority (80%) in the farm sector. Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha emerge as the leading states for women FPCs. The study emphasizes the multifaceted role of women in PCs, beyond as producer shareholders, and notes the challenges

they face, including social norms and limited access to assets. To support women PCs, the study suggests a focus on establishing business processes, standard operating procedures, and building a business network. It underscores the necessity for shared imagination in envisioning FPC success at various levels, from farmers to the sector, and advocates for different operating models and robust shareholder protection. The way forward includes promoting women-only PCs, setting inclusion targets, providing incubation support, and re-imagining Community-Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) as business incubators.

4. Key Note Address by Smt. Suseela Chintala, CGM, NABARD

The keynote address was delivered by Smt. Suseela Chintala, CGM, CGM, from NABARD, RO-Telangana. The CGM underscored NABARD's commitment to promoting FPOs and SHGs. The address provided insights into NABARD's program initiatives, outlining their past contributions, current strategies, and future commitments to further empower and support FPOs and SHGs in the agricultural sector. She highlighted the different programs and schemes designed and implemented by NABARD for FPOs specifically women farmers and women FPOs. She shared the benefit which women FPOs have got through the consistent support and guidance from NABARD.



She mentioned that the future of the rural sector and empowerment of women farmers can be done through development of self-reliant FPOs functioning as viable business enterprises. She shared the learnings and experiences from the field to the different FPOs and federations she has visited and focused on the idea of FPO to FPO connect. She emphasized on the need of FPOs to come together and connect with each other for business transaction and experience sharing. She also highlighted the importance of having dedicated capacity building programs customized for women FPOs and also encouraged promoting agencies like APMAS and PRADAN to collaborate on such initiatives.

She laid down the following four areas for strengthening FPOs namely: Social Mobilization, Share-capital contribution, Good Governance, and Robust Business. Towards the end, the CGM NABARD RO shared her idea of forming a networking platform or forum dedicated for all-

women FPOs to bring women leaders from Telangana state on one page for strengthening and taking up higher order business activities by women FPOs.

5. Panel Session 1: Enabling and Disabling Factors of Women in FPOs

Moderators: Dr. V. Rukmini Rao, MAKAM & Mr. N. V. Ramana, Board Member, APMAS

Panellist: Ms. Thayaramma, Board Member, Shreeja Mahila Milk Producer Company; Mr. Rafi, ICAR- Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR); Ms. Kiran, Saheli Khetkhaliyan Mahila FPCL; Ms. Archana, PRADAN; Dr. Sathyendra Kumar, NAARM; Dr. Kalpana Sastry, AgHub; and Ms. Chandrakala, Board Member, Dheesali FPCL.

The Panel Session 1 – Enabling and Disabling Factors of Women in FPOs delved into crucial aspects of women's participation in FPOs. The moderators, in their introductory remarks, established a framework for exploring FPO involvement, emphasizing the unmet commitment of doubling farmers' income and showcasing the success of SHGs in income enhancement. They advocated for diversified government procurement, proposing the inclusion of millets alongside paddy. The alignment of NABARD's schemes with FPOs and FPCs' expectations was questioned, and the session underscored the importance of identifying specific needs within these organizations and promoting mutual learning among them.

Ms. Thayaramma, Board Member- Shreeja Dairy Cooperative shared insights about the cooperative's transformative journey, reliance on middlemen to become a community-driven initiative was highlighted. Previously facing challenges like meeting family needs, including the mortgaging of assets, Shreeja has evolved into a robust organization with 1.25 lakh members and a turnover of 1000 crores. Operating in 105 Mandal Samakhya, supported by the National Dairy Development Corporation, Shreeja has embraced modern practices such as digital payment systems and efficient collection units, exemplifying a successful Cooperative model.



Mr. Rafi (Representative from ICAR - Indian Institute of Millet Research) provided valuable insights, focusing on the promotion of 40 FPOs across four different states, with a specific emphasis on 11 Women FPOs. The discussion included a success story, showcasing a particularly thriving FPO that achieved a business turnover of 38 lakhs in the millet sector.



A notable aspect highlighted was the integration of SHG women with FPOs. Initially restricted to SHGs, permissions for paddy procurement centers were expanded to include FPOs through concerted efforts. This signifies a significant stride in the collaboration between SHGs and FPOs, presenting a pathway for reinforcing FPOs through the integration of SHGs.

Ms. Kiran, Board Member - Saheli Khetkhyan Mahila FPC, from Madhya Pradesh shared her experiences, focusing on women's empowerment and the challenges encountered in forming a company. She detailed the mobilization of 800 shareholders initially, individually contributed 500 each, and subsequently increased to 1700 shareholders in the company. She highlighted initial struggles, including the time-consuming process of opening bank accounts (20-25 days) and challenges in securing loans.



In terms of financial progress, the FPC clocked a business turnover of 15 lakh in the first year, 18 lakhs in the second, and an impressive 1 crore in the third year. With an expanding membership, plans are underway to elevate the turnover to 5 crores. She discussed efforts involving meetings with relevant departments, such as agriculture, to address seed selection and other agricultural activities. The company encourages members to purchase seeds internally, yielding 20-25 quintals of paddy. Support from organizations like PRADAN has been instrumental, although she highlighted the absence of support from banks in their initiatives.

Ms. Archana, from PRADAN, which has 40 years of its operation since its establishment, discussed the organization's work in supporting FPOs across agriculture, sericulture, and enterprise sectors during the session. They manage a combined business turnover of 620 crores. Addressing patriarchal challenges within their cooperative, the speaker highlighted the complexities faced by women breaking away from traditional norms for business engagement.



Shared responsibilities have been crucial in overcoming these challenges. PRADAN, recognizing the need to redefine its gender lens, currently has 28% women in its workforce. She stressed the importance of partnerships and collaborations, citing the collaboration with MAKAAAM as integral to progress. She emphasized the role of enabling factors in SHGs and the key role of NRLM, stating that collaboration is key to addressing challenges shaped by patriarchy.

Dr. Satyendra Kumar from NAARM discussed their programs notably providing training to 30 young graduates as prospective CEOs and their FPO Immersion where 30% being women. Promotion of prospective women CEOs has shown an encouraging trend, and their performance has been observed to be better than that of their male counterparts. Trained female CEOs have successfully been placed in WFPOs, including Sabala FPOs in Vizianagaram, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted training initiatives.



Delving into the millet business sector, Dr. Satyendra shared success in generating a business turnover of 6 crores. Within the WFPO structure, an internal

committee oversees crucial functions such as procurement and marketing. This holistic approach ensures the efficient functioning of WFPOs, contributing to their overall success and sustainability.

Dr. Kalpana Sastry, from AgHub provided key insights during the session by highlighting the cyclical nature of trends in the country, emphasizing the evolving landscape post-G20 and the importance of South-South collaborations. Discussing the diversity within FPOs, she underscored the impact of Agricultural Technology and outlined plans for incubation centers in Telangana to support Ag Tech innovations.



This approach aims to bridge the rural-urban technology gap in a comprehensive manner, reflecting a commitment to overall FPO development and sustainability. Notably, India's ambition to position itself as a global leader in South-South collaboration aligns with efforts to promote sustainable agriculture and economic development. Her insights offer a glimpse into the dynamic FPO sector in India, showcasing local success stories and the potential for global collaborations.

Ms. Chandrakala, Board Member- Dheesali FPO, shared detailed insights into the operations of their all-women FPO with a strong focus on rural markets, specifically assisting farmers in selling vegetables and managing the paddy value chain. They have also diversified into producing sauces and pickles. It was presented that Dheesali FPO has successfully conducted a business of 55 lakhs, showcasing a diverse range of agricultural activities.



The moderators towards the end concluded the learnings from the discussion by highlighting on the important factors for success of all-women FPOs and promoting participation of women leaders in decision making in FPOs.

6. Panel Session 2: Engendering FPOs & Enhancing Women's role in Value Chain

Moderators: Dr. Soma KP, MAKAAAM & Dr. Senthil Vinayagam, CEO, a-idea NAARM and Mr.K.Jayaram, National Mission Manager, Farm Livelihoods, NRLM

Panellist: Ms.Shilpa Vasavada, MAKAAAM, Ms.Rajitha, COO, SERP Telangana, Mr. Pawan Kumar, SM Sehagal Foundation, Ms. Sandhya Rani, TRICOR, Mr. Selvarajan Ganapathy, TNSRLM, Mr. Vamsikrishna, Zepto and Dr. Venu Margam, Kalgudi

The Panel Session 2 – "Engendering FPOs & Enhancing Women's Role in Value Chain" of the Policy Workshop, moderated by Dr. Soma KP from MAKAAAM, Dr. Senthil Vinayagam (CEO of a-idea NAARM), Mr. K Jayaram (National Mission Manager at NRLM) focused on key aspects included Value Chain, Value Addition, Technology Adoption, CEO attrition, Human Resource

challenges, training and promotion of Community Resource Persons, concerns regarding buyers and sellers in the value chain, and governance challenges. The session highlighted the government's role in promoting FPOs, particularly the prominence of 10,000 FPOs. The discussion explored the inherent patriarchal embeddedness in social and economic relations and its connection to the prevailing male dominated land-owning system, emphasizing its implications for overall societal well-being. It further discussed how FPOs, within this context, go beyond conventional business metrics, focusing on the broader spectrum of well-being. The session underscored the pivotal role of women in negotiating within the value chain, reshaping its dimensions, and contributing to the success of FPOs.

During Session 2 representative from **TRICOR, Ms. Sandya Rani** shared valuable insights into the schemes offered by TRICOR and its support for Tribal FPOs. TRICOR provides substantial assistance, including infrastructural development and financial support of up to 60 lakhs, benefiting 61 tribal FPOs in Telangana.



Their support includes custom hiring centers, godowns, and value addition initiatives, with a focus on specific business needs in areas like Bhadrachalam and Mulugu, particularly developing chili units. TRICOR also extends support to FPOs in Adilabad, offering technical training to the Chenchu PTVG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) communities in Nagarkurnool district. She encouraged workshop participants to promote Tribal FPOs and utilize the schemes offered by TRICOR in collaboration with NABARD.

Eligibility for Tribal FPOs is categorized based on the percentage of ST (Scheduled Tribe) shareholders. Those with 90% and above are classified as C1, 70% and above as C2, and 50% and above as C3. FPOs with less than 50% ST shareholders fall into the C4 category and are ineligible for TRICOR benefits. Even for new FPOs, eligibility criteria determine the benefits they can access. The benefits are a combination of a 10% FPO contribution, 50% TRICOR support, and 40% of the loan.

She acknowledged the support from APMAS in preparing DPRs and providing training to FPO staff, reinforcing the collaborative effort to strengthen Tribal FPOs and contribute to their sustainable development.

Mr. Pawan Kumar from Sehgal Foundation shared insights gained from four to five years of working with 36 FPOs. The presentation highlighted societal structural barriers, with a focus on addressing North-South disparities in women's exposure. He stressed how to focus on product development tailored to meet buyers' specific needs, need to address educational disparities and promote gender inclusivity.



Their efforts include striving for 30% women representation in FPOs' Board of Directors and empowering women in product

management and branding. Despite initiatives to connect with platforms like Flipkart and training programs, marketing remains a challenge in a predominantly male-dominated market where women face structural barriers as both buyers and sellers.

Mr. Selvarajan Ganapathy from TNSRLM, emphasized the pivotal role of women in agriculture and rural development. He discussed the Tamil Nadu government's initiative to promote Farmer Producer Groups.



While streamlining FPO activities, the initiative faced challenges in Human Resource constraints, and he advocated for involving skilled graduates in managing FPOs. Ensuring quality produce, addressing communication gaps among FPO members, and utilizing SC & ST Sub Plan grants for FPO promotion were also highlighted.

Ms. Shilpa Vasavada from MAKAAAM raised crucial points regarding the seamless integration of SHGs into FPOs. She highlighted the financial dynamics impacting FPO membership, emphasizing the challenges faced by women in convincing their husbands to contribute membership fees. She addressed the issue of terminology in FPOs, calling for capacity-building to ensure women understand complex terms. The discussion also explored the identification of women as farmers and FPO members, considering their gradual uptake of responsibilities as Board Members. Challenges in selling produce at wholesale markets, especially at night, were acknowledged, leading to suggestions for simplified legal documents and women-friendly legal compliances tailored to the specific needs of WFPOs. Addressing educational and documentation constraints among members emerged as crucial steps for effective solutions.

Mr. Vamsi Krishna, Vice President at Zepto, shared insights into their innovative venture. Zepto, a tech-driven e-commerce company initiated three years ago during the challenges of the COVID pandemic, operates in eight states, handling 60,000 deliveries daily. With a current valuation of one million dollars, Zepto sources 60% of its products directly from rural farming communities. Notably, women contribute significantly to the value addition and packaging processes, comprising 40% of the workforce. He highlighted Zepto's commitment to gender inclusivity and empowerment and expressed interest in forming strategic ties with women farmers and women FPOs for sourcing agricultural products.



Zepto's success story, driven by technological innovation and a dedication to gender-inclusive practices, stands as an exemplary model contributing to the development and empowerment of farming communities and FPOs in the agricultural value chain.

Dr. Venu Margam from Kalgudi shared insights into their technology platform and their collaboration with organizations like Shegal Foundation and other stakeholders, Kalgudi digitizes PFOs and partners with SERP for the digitalization of SERP-promoted FPOs. He highlighted challenges in selling produce and negotiating with major buyers, emphasizing their technology platform's role in promoting transparency, traceability, and accountability.



He also discussed linking FPOs into Cheyutha Mart and explored B2B and B2C transactions between SHGs. The representative emphasized the increasing demand for quality products and strategies to ensure and maintain product quality. In addressing sector complexities, the importance of connecting retail outlets, simplifying legal compliance, establishing buyer contacts, and engaging in effective negotiations were outlined. Dr. Venu Margam also highlighted the potential benefits of availing government schemes, such as TRICOR, for FPO promotion.

In concluding the moderators acknowledged existing structural issues but expressed optimism in identifying solutions. Advocating for a shift from a linear pyramid economy to a circular economy in the way forward, he emphasized collaboration with government and banking institutions. Sensitizing men (husbands) to facilitate the inclusion of women in FPOs and their operations was highlighted as a crucial aspect of this transformative journey.

7. Open Session: Enhancing Women's Role in FPOs and Agri Value Chain

Moderators: Dr. K.C. Gummagolmath, MANAGE, Ms. Ashalatha, MAKAM and Mr. Vijay Nadiminti, AgHub



In the Open Session, the moderators highlighted the cooperative model's importance, citing successful examples like Lijjat Papad and SEWA, in empowering women and contributing to the sector's overall success. Emphasizing the crucial role of a well-integrated value chain, the moderators commended the federated model and urged for standardized and accurate data to inform policies. The need for effective FPO leadership especially women farmers was emphasized, suggesting the development of para-FPO staff to play a pivotal role across the country.

In the opening session of the Policy Workshop on Engendering FPOs, several constructive suggestions were put forth by the panelists:

Broadening Evaluation Parameters: Emphasized the need to expand evaluation parameters beyond traditional business metrics, recognizing the contributions of FPOs in areas like natural farming and socio-economic empowerment initiatives.

Simplifying Legal Compliance: Advocated for simplifying legal and business compliance processes to enhance the effectiveness of Women Farmers' Producer Organizations (WFPOs).

Women-Friendly Tools: Suggested the development and adoption of women-friendly tools in the farming sector and other FPO-related businesses to facilitate market linkages for WFPOs.

Transition under MACS Act: Proposed a shift towards promoting FPOs under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MACS) Act to address compliance challenges under the Companies Act.

Addressing Credit Linkage Challenges: Highlighted the need to address credit linkage challenges for FPOs and ensure compliance with relevant regulations for smoother credit access.

Women-Centric Measures: Advocated for women-friendly legal compliance measures, including provisions for women as shareholders and Board of Directors (BoD) and provision of free land title registration for women.

GST Reimbursement: Suggested GST reimbursement for FPOs.

Reducing Mutation Period: Proposed reducing the mutation period for the death of a husband for land registration.

Improving Literacy and Nutrition: Advocated for initiatives to improve literacy, reduce fertilizer use, and enhance nutrition.

Incentivizing Female Membership: Suggested incentives for 30% women members as shareholders and BoD members in FPOs.

Empowering Gram Panchayats: Proposed empowering Gram Panchayats to issue certificates for business activities, facilitating FPOs in navigating market and business challenges.

On-Site Training: Emphasized providing on-site training to FPOs in their places, facilitated by institutions like NIRD PR.

Local Language Documents: Recommended making MoUs and MoAs available in local languages for clarity, particularly in regions where English comprehension might be a challenge.

8. Key Outcomes of the Policy Workshop

After a day-long participatory workshop, inputs and suggestions were captured from all the participants and speakers, consolidated in the following manner. The moderators opened the platform for discussion from all the participants.

Gender Inclusivity Policy: Formulate a comprehensive policy framework to explicitly promote gender inclusivity within FPOs, outlining specific measures, incentives, and support mechanisms.

Financial Collaboration: Establish financial support mechanisms through collaborations with partners like NABARD, PRADAN, MAKAAAM, DGRV, and AEIN Luxembourg, focusing on gender inclusivity.

Increase Women-Led FPOs: Set a policy goal to significantly increase the registration of Women FPOs, providing targeted support and incentives for their formation and success.

SHG Experience Integration: Leverage SHG experience in business, value addition, and marketing by designing and implementing tailored training modules for FPO CEOs and Board members.

Prevent FPO Failures: Implement policies focusing on preventing FPO failures, emphasizing collective responsibility among stakeholders for the viability and success of FPOs.

SHG Integration: Encourage seamless integration of SHG experience and social capital into FPO operations, recognizing valuable insights gained over 30+ years.

Data Monitoring: Develop policies to enhance gender-disaggregated data collection and monitoring of FPOs, enabling evidence-based policymaking.

Women's Leadership Promotion: Advocate for policies promoting and building capacities of women leaders, especially tribal women, in mixed FPOs.

Women-Friendly Tools Incentives: Introduce policies and incentives to promote the development and adoption of women-friendly tools and implements in IT and Agriculture.

Global and National Collaborations: Foster collaborations with national and international initiatives encouraging women's leadership in FPO business operations.

Gender Inclusive FPO Registration Targets: Introduce policies setting district-wise targets for the registration of Women FPOs, ensuring a specific percentage of FPOs are led by women. Encourage women's active participation in FPOs.

Empowerment through Land and Finance: Advocate for policies promoting women's empowerment through land entitlements, improved access to finance, and specialized financial instruments tailored to women in agriculture.

Women-Friendly Agricultural Technologies: Develop and implement policies that foster the adoption of women-friendly agricultural technologies, acknowledging the pivotal role of women in farm labour and pre-production tasks.

Redefine Measurement Indicators: Revise and redefine measurement indicators for Women FPOs (WFPOs), Mixed FPOs, and Men-led FPOs, ensuring a comprehensive approach that factors in vision, member participation, and governance.

Business Processes and Network Support: Formulate policies to support Women FPOs by establishing business processes, standard operating procedures, and building robust business networks. Provide incubation support and reimagine Community-Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) as business incubators.

Specialized Training Initiatives: Develop targeted training initiatives for women leaders in FPOs, with a specific focus on tribal women. Enhance capacities to navigate legal compliance, business development, and governance.

Women Representation in FPO Boards: Advocate for a minimum of 30% women members as shareholders and Board of Directors (BoD) in FPOs. Encourage policies that promote women leadership and active participation in decision-making.

Credit Access and Legal Compliance Measures: Address credit linkage challenges by ensuring compliance with relevant regulations. Propose the provision of women-friendly legal compliance measures to empower and encourage active participation of women in FPOs.

Government Support for Land Registration: Lobby for government support to waive fines for FPOs. Propose provisions for free land title registration for women, encouraging land registration in women's names.

Infrastructure Development: Advocate for the creation of infrastructure, including godowns and facilities for value addition, to support large-scale FPO businesses. Encourage government support for safe boarding, lodging, and safety measures for women in the agricultural business.

MAKAAM along with APMAS, PRADAN and other organisations will meet, discuss and take the policy engagement forward with the relevant government authorities and the promoting institutions.
