

Gender Entrepreneurship in a Rural Scenario: A Case Study of South West Midnapore, West Bengal

Tapati Dasgupta, Atanu K. Roy and R. N. Chattopadhyay

*Rural Planning & Management Unit, Department of Architecture and Regional Planning,
IIT Kharagpur, Kharagpur 721 302, West Bengal, India
Telephone: (03222) – 220460 / 283208 (O) / 277625 (R); Fax: (03222) - 255303 / 282700
E-mail: tdg_iitkgp@yahoo.com & rnc_iitkgp@yahoo.com*

KEYWORDS Entrepreneurship; gender; participatory forest management; *Sabai* grass

ABSTRACT Women entrepreneurship is a much nurtured notion of today. Women, after long years of toil and torment have come out of their painful past and they are now standing in a situation when they can handle all hurdles in firm hands and they have even established themselves as women entrepreneurs in different corners of the Third World Countries. In the urban sector, of course, women are displaying their acumen in different spheres. But rural women in India are for centuries living in a world of seclusion and inhibition. The age-long superstitious slumber has turned rural Indian women sterile and inefficient. They have forgotten their traditional skills for lack of training, polishing and suitable financial back-up. That they can ever come to limelight and can have an exposure in entrepreneurship arena is still an enigma. It is a laborious task to sensitize the gender rural section and persuade them to take up such activities which would help them in their process of livelihood generation with the application of simple and low cost technology which would finally motivate them to be self reliant. This paper unfolds the tale of struggle and strife witnessed by the tribal women in a rural set-up of South West Midnapore, West Bengal to give a realistic tune to the role of women entrepreneurship in a stringent manner. The message that we get from this paper is that a micro experiment of rural entrepreneurship can be a macro experiment in the years ahead.