

Workshop on “Trends of Employment in Sugarcane Industry for Inclusive Sustainable Development”

5th March 2025

Farmer's Progress, Country's Progress

Introduction

In India, 57% of rural households were involved in agriculture in Year 2021-22 reflecting the huge contribution in Indian Economy. The agriculture sector provides a livelihood for about 42.3% of the population. Majority of rural women are also involved in farming. Most of the farming jobs such as sowing, weed removal, harvesting, storing of crop like essential task are predominantly done by women. When we talk about inclusivity, rural area and rural women's work is not much recognized according to their contribution level. It directly or indirectly negatively affects the progress of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) to be achieved by India. This gap needs to be eliminated in order to fulfill the SDG Goal 5 “Gender Equality” and SDG Goal 8 “Decent work and Economic Growth”. Inclusivity of rural areas and their women's contribution in farming also shape the employment trends of country.

Sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) is one of the most significant commercial crops globally, playing a pivotal role in the agricultural economies of tropical and subtropical regions. Originating in South Asia and Southeast Asia, sugarcane belongs to the Gramineae family and is a tropical grass valued for its versatility and renewable nature.

The majority of global sugarcane production 96% comes from developing countries. Among the top producers, countries like Brazil, India, China, Thailand, Pakistan, Mexico, Colombia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. Brazil leads the world as the largest sugarcane producer, accounting for over 40% of global production with 739.3 million Tonnes. Brazil's sugarcane industry is a cornerstone of its economy, with a significant portion directed toward ethanol production, making it a global leader in biofuels. India, the second-largest producer with 341.2 million Tonnes, contributes approximately 25% of global sugar production. The sugarcane industry is a major contributor to rural employment and economic development worldwide. Approximately 100 million people in 120 sugar-producing countries rely on sugarcane cultivation for their

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livelihoods (South African Sugar Association, 2022). Global sugarcane production has grown steadily over the years, reaching 1.87 billion Tonnes in 2020, cultivated over 26 million hectares (FAOSTAT, 2022a).

Agriculture is the backbone of India's economy, providing livelihoods to a significant portion of the population. As per Census 2011, 54.6% of the total workforce in India is engaged in agriculture and allied sector activities. The sector remains a critical contributor to the country's economy, accounting for 18.4% of India's Gross Value Added (GVA) at current prices during 2022-23. The sugarcane industry supports over 6 million smallholder farmers and an additional 50 million people involved in related activities, highlighting its critical role in rural socio-economic development (Bonsucro, 2021c). The country's sugarcane production is divided between tropical regions, including Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, which contribute 51% of the production, and sub-tropical regions like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Punjab, and Haryana, which account for the remaining 49% despite having 55% of the total area under sugarcane cultivation (GOI, 2016). Sugar Mills in India have capacities ranging from 1250 TCD to 10000 TCD. The production of sugarcane and India's sugar sector is essential to the country's socioeconomic progress. The rural areas by utilizing local resources, producing more revenue and jobs available. Roughly 7.5% of people living in rural areas, or dependent on each other are roughly 60 Million sugarcane farmers and several agricultural workers are engaged in the planting, harvesting, and related tasks of sugarcane. For example, in 1950-51, the total area under sugarcane cultivation was 1.17 million hectares. In 2020-21, the total area accounted for 4.85 million hectares. This underscores the importance of this crop in both the agriculture and industry sectors. With regards to sugarcane production, it could be seen that, in 1950-51, it was 57.05 million Tonnes which increased to 405.40 million Tonnes in 2020-21.

Uttar Pradesh is called as "Sugar Bowl" of India, so the attention automatically goes towards U.P. Around 45% of India's total sugarcane production comes from Uttar Pradesh only and 35 lakh sugarcane farmers are members of the 169 Uttar Pradesh Cooperative Cane Development Societies and these societies supply sugarcane directly to the Sugar Mill established in Uttar Pradesh.

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Sustainable Development Goals related to Sugarcane sector:

SDG Goal 8

Deal with providing decent and safe working environments, ensuring economic growth and promoting consumption and production in a sustainable manner.

SDG Goal 9

Goal 9 deals with the promotion of investments in infrastructure, as well as fostering technological progress in order to achieve increased resource and energy efficiency.

SDG Goal 12

Use of agrochemicals, water use, workers safety and rights, land rights etc

Within the above context, a present workshop will be organised on **5th March 2025 (hybrid mode)** in V.V. Giri National Labour Institute (An autonomous body under Ministry of Labour and Employment) NOIDA. The broad objectives of the workshop are as follows:

Objectives of the workshop

- Livelihood of sugarcane farmers and migrants workers in current scenario
- Gender employment trends in sugarcane industry
- Sugarcane based Government Scheme/Policies
- To understand the schemes promoting women farmers in rural areas.
- Role of Cane officer and Block Development officer in Sugarcane for inclusive farming practises
- Transformative impact of Digitalisation on various stakeholders' viz. Farmers, Migrant workers, Mill workers and Kohlu owners.

Targeted Audience for the workshop-

- Government Officials related to agriculture sector
- Sugarcane experts
- Cane officers and Block Development officers
- Village Sarpanches and Gram Sachiv

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- Sugarcane related Trade union representative
- Sugarcane Farmers
- Academicians working on Sugarcane sector
- Research Scholars

Registration link –

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfvxPGPA9fs1zl_nXDvrXxpND7Apn788jzU9V4GsxEqSuKTAA/viewform

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