



© Mick Minard/REEF Reports

Women Farmers as Decision Makers

Women comprise over 40 percent of the agricultural labor force in India. However, sufficient training and farm production resources that are available through agricultural extension services do not reach women. With such limited access to knowledge, women have little or no role in decision making. To empower women farmers so they can increase their farms' productivity, and to encourage the use of sustainable farming practices, the Sehgal Foundation team works together with women farmers in two women-centric agricultural initiatives—*Unnat Krishi* (improved agriculture) and *Krishi Chetna* (agricultural awareness).

The main focus of both initiatives is on improving the livelihoods of women farmers by training them in the use of sustainable farming practices, including soil testing and integrated nutrient applications, selection of suitable seed varieties, and pest management, and to help them improve soil fertility, conserve water, and increase crop yields.



SEHGAL
FOUNDATION



GROWING RURAL INCOME

Our approach is based on collaborations with already-existing self-help groups (SHG) and ensuring participation of women by selecting *Krishi Sakhis* (farmers' friends) as resource people in each village. The SHG federation maintains a project fund, to which group members contribute. The fund makes possible a timely supply of farm production resources.

Farmers with a minimum of one *bigha* (1 hectare=4 *bighas*) of land are selected for demonstrating sustainable agricultural practices, based on soil testing, that include the use of suitable seed varieties, urea, diammonium phosphate (DAP), zinc, boron, potash, sulphur, and iron. The demonstrations are conducted on a half *bigha*. Farmers use their traditional farming practices in the remainder of their plots. The seeds are provided for one *bigha* so that the difference in crop growth and yields can be compared.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

For 7,800 participating households (about 3,000 women farmers) in 28 villages in Alwar, Rajasthan, 20 *Krishi Sakhis* are trained in the *Unnat Krishi* and *Krishi Chetna* initiatives, to inform, share, and support other women farmers. Increased participation and decision making by women farmers has resulted in 30-40% increases in wheat, mustard, and millet crop yields.

OUR PARTNERS ENSURE VALUE

Sehgal Foundation has partnered with K+S KALI GmbH, Germany; Mir Hytech Seed International, Egypt; and Ibtada, India, on these projects. Partnerships such as these make a difference in increasing our reach and strengthening our impact.

For further information, please email partnerships@smsfoundation.org
Join the team. www.smsfoundation.org

S M Sehgal Foundation (Sehgal Foundation) is a public, charitable trust registered in India since 1999, based in Gurgaon, Haryana.

A WOMAN SPEAKS

"Through the *Krishi Chetna* project, I have gained knowledge on soil testing, good quality seed, appropriate seed distribution rate, and use of fertilizers. With additional agricultural income, many women like me don't have to struggle anymore for the basic necessities of our families."

-Gindo, Maulya village, Alwar

TOGETHER
WE EMPOWER
RURAL INDIA