

## **Empowerment of Rural Women through Backyard Poultry Rearing: A Programme by ERS, ICAR-IVRI, Kolkata under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**

The Eastern Regional Station (ERS), ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Kolkata, conducted a programme on “**Empowerment of rural women through backyard poultry rearing**” at Balarampur village of Sonarpur block, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal. The programme, attended by 34 female SC beneficiaries, was conducted under the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (DAPSC) Programme to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> years of **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**.



Apart from Dr P S Banerjee, Station In-charge, and Dr. A K Das, Principal Scientist from ERS, Kolkata; Dr H. N. Gartaula and Dr Prama Mukhopadhyay of IRRI, New Delhi and Dr Mahesh Chander, HD (EE), ICAR-IVRI, Izatnagar were also present in the programme.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are important for achieving sustainable development. In fact, empowering and mainstreaming rural women workforce in agriculture and allied sectors will enhance food and nutrition security and alleviate poverty and hunger. Poultry production in rural/backyard areas is one of such promising strategies. Poultry Based Intervention as a tool, is the need of the hour for quality participation and empowerment of women, thereby ensuring poverty alleviation, food security and promotion of gender equality.



Keeping this in view, the programme was organized to orient the participants on different gender issues in agriculture, especially on livestock and poultry sector. The team from IVRI and collaborating institutes interacted with the women beneficiaries to identify key issues and the constraints being faced by them during

backyard poultry rearing and where the intervention is needed. Based on this, a project “Bundled Socio-technical Innovations (STIBs) for Women’s Resilience and Empowerment” was designed/conceptualized in order to apply various innovations in different combinations to harness gender and social equality for resilience in agri-food Systems. The purpose was to improve the professional competence and upgrade the knowledge of participants by addressing the issues and constraints of beneficiaries during poultry rearing.



Earlier, during his welcome address, Dr. P S Banerjee, SIC, briefed the gathering about objectives of the programme and role played by ICAR-IVRI, Kolkata in implementing various schemes and flagship programmes such as Developmental Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes (erstwhile TSP), Developmental Action Plan for Scheduled Castes (erstwhile SCSP) and North-Eastern Hill (NEH) for improving the socio-economic conditions of the beneficiaries. The SIC also apprised the participants about the importance of poultry farming for promoting women empowerment in Agriculture. Dr. A K Das briefed the beneficiaries about the importance of good management on animal productivity in general and poultry farming in particular. He also emphasized the nutrition, housing, health care management as well as marketing issues to be adopted for profitable poultry rearing.



At the end of programme, a kit consists of medicines was provided to each of the farmers. Dr A K Das, PS in his concluding remarks expressed heartfelt thanks to the SIC, the learned guests and all the participants for making the programme a success.