HIMACHAL PRADESH
JICA AGRICULTURE PROJECT-II
DAILY DIARY
HAMIRPUR: 28 OCTOBER, 2026

Training on Empowerment & Livelihood Promotion of 20 Self-Help Groups held

*Dr. Sunil Chauhan Emphasises Making Women's Groups Self-Reliant



Kangra, October 27: A one-day training programme for members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) was organised by the District Project Management Unit (DPMU), Palampur, under the Himachal Pradesh Crop Diversification Promotion Project-II, JICA-ODA, at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kangra. As many as 85 participants from 20 sub-projects of Kangra district attended the programme.

In his message on the occasion, the Project Director Dr. Sunil Chauhan urged members of Self-Help Groups to apply the knowledge gained during the training practically in their daily activities and livelihood-related endeavours. He emphasised that SHGs should not remain confined to savings and credit activities but should also promote agriculture-based enterprises, self-employment and income-generating activities through collective efforts.

Stressing the importance of mutual cooperation, regular meetings, financial discipline and transparency within the groups, Dr. Chauhan stated that strong and self-reliant groups could play a significant role in improving the economic conditions of rural households and providing better livelihood opportunities for women. He encouraged the participants to ensure active participation in line with the project's objectives and to share the knowledge acquired during the training with their respective groups and communities. He particularly emphasised the need to make women's groups self-reliant to strengthen the rural economy.

The primary objective of the training programme was to strengthen the capacities of Self-Help Groups, make women more economically independent, develop new livelihood opportunities and improve the income and livelihood prospects of rural households under HPCDP-II. During the training, participants received valuable information on effective SHG management, financial discipline, agriculture-based enterprises, livelihood development, natural farming and collective marketing.

At the inaugural session, Mr. Rajneesh Sharma, Subject Matter Specialist, DPMU Palampur, welcomed the participants and subject experts. Highlighting the importance of Self-Help Groups under HPCDP-II, he stated that organised efforts, mutual cooperation, regular meetings and collective decision-making could economically empower rural communities, particularly women, and create new livelihood opportunities.

Dr. R.S. Thakur, PMC Expert, provided detailed information on the need for and concept of Self-Help Groups, the benefits of their formation, and the roles and responsibilities of group office-bearers. He emphasised the importance of regular meetings, savings, internal lending, transparency and the proper maintenance of essential records, including minutes registers and financial accounts. He explained that effective group management should be based on mutual trust, financial discipline and accountability.



Dr. Picky Sharma elaborated on various livelihood promotion opportunities available through Self-Help Groups. She highlighted the potential for increasing income through agricultural and allied activities, such as vegetable cultivation, natural farming, animal husbandry and dairy development. She also stressed the need to promote self-employment through non-farm activities, including tailoring, embroidery and food processing, while encouraging group-based livelihood enterprises.

Dr. Neetu Sharma, Scientist at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kangra, delivered a lecture on the role of Self-Help Groups in agriculture-based enterprises. She highlighted the contribution of SHGs to establishing and managing agricultural and allied enterprises. She explained that group members could create self-employment opportunities through vegetable production, food processing, value addition of agricultural produce and other activities based on locally available resources. She also highlighted opportunities for better resource utilisation, entrepreneurship development and increased household income.

Dr. Nardev Thakur delivered a lecture on empowering Self-Help Groups and farmers through collective marketing. Emphasising the importance of collective aggregation, grading, packaging and marketing of agricultural produce, he explained that collective efforts could help farmers establish better market linkages, obtain remunerative prices for their produce and enhance their bargaining power.

During the session on natural farming and nutrition gardens, Dr. Sanjay Sharma, In-charge of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kangra, and Dr. Deep Kumar highlighted the concept, significance and benefits of natural farming. They explained its importance in improving soil health, protecting the environment and reducing cultivation costs.

They also emphasised the adoption of nutri-vegetable kitchen gardens to meet household nutritional requirements, ensure access to fresh and nutritious vegetables, and make better use of available land and resources.