

# Strengthening Dairy Cooperatives

## Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana

'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana', announced by the Prime Minister on 15 August 2014 is a National Mission for Financial Inclusion to ensure access to financial services in an affordable manner. The scheme aims to achieve universal financial inclusion and every household will gain access to formal credit system. Under the scheme, anyone can easily open a bank account with special benefits of a debit card, accidental coverage of Rs 1 lakh and no minimum balance. Additional benefits would accrue through credit of direct benefit transfer under Government schemes, interest on savings, overdraft facility upto Rs 5000 after six months on satisfactory conduct of the account, life insurance cover of Rs 30 thousand, access to pension etc. Though every member of a household can have a separate bank account, but only one account per household can avail overdraft and for this preference is given to any female member.

As, a majority of the milk producers may not have bank account, the state cooperative federations and unions can take advantage of this scheme and encourage all those members who do not have a bank account to open an account under the scheme.

This would save the milk producers from exploitation by moneylenders in the informal credit system and they would benefit from a range of financial products such as insurance and pensions. This would also help in improving the practice related to payment to the producers, as payments can be directly credited to bank accounts.

## Women in dairy sector

In India, rural women play crucial role in agriculture and allied activities as farmer and worker to provide nutritional and food security. Around 85% of the rural women are engaged in rearing of livestock and agriculture related work. As a part of dairying, milch cattle and buffaloes in India are traditionally tended by rural women.

However, in most instances, women have been left out of decision making, in spite being the major contributor in cattle and buffalo rearing. They have less access than men to the resources and opportunities.

There is a need to bring more women in the main stream of operation and management of cooperatives, which play an important role in not only enrolment of women as members but also in facilitating them in taking up leadership roles. In order to achieve this, greater number of all women Dairy Cooperative Societies may be organized as well as more focus has to be given to enrolling of women members in the existing Dairy Cooperative Societies.

Financial assistance and subsidy for undertaking activities to increase participation of women at all level of dairy cooperatives can be sought through various central Government schemes, such as National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP), National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development (NPDDDB) etc.

Inclusion of more and more women in the cooperatives as members will improve their socio-economic status. Experience has shown that women are more competent in managing scarce family resources. Recognising their contribution in the financial well-being of the family and encouraging their active participation in income generating activities will lead to prosperity of the family and empowerment for the women to take up higher leadership roles.

Ensuring testing of milk at village level through upgraded technology will strengthen the milk collection system by more fairness and transparent manner at Village DCS:

- Automatic weighment of the milk, testing of the milk quality i.e. Fat%, SNF% and other relevant content in the milk.
- Print out of the acknowledgement slip to milk producers for quantity of milk poured, Fat%, SNF% and total payment of the milk.
- Storage of the complete customer details including name, mobile, bank and processing of the timely milk payment.
- Real time online data transfer to the server of the main dairy plant without loss of data
- Customized rate chart can be configured
- To eliminate conventional methods of paper works in milk procurement process
- Upgraded technology also ensures to send customized SMS to producer with required details such as FAT, SNF, Quantity, Rate etc.