



MANAGE Agricultural Extension “Evening4Learning (E4L)” Webinar Series



Theme: “Community Sustainable Extension Systems”



Topic: “Kudumbashree's Sustainable Agricultural Extension Strategies for Inclusive Growth”



Schedule:

29-08-2024, 19:00-20:30 PM



About the Program

The MANAGE Agricultural Extension “Evening4Learning” Webinar Series is aimed at enhancing knowledge and professional engagement in the field of agricultural extension. The four day series is structured with each day focusing on a distinct topic under a common theme, allowing participants to gain comprehensive insights into key areas of extension. The programme is intended for a diverse audience, including postgraduate and doctoral students, agricultural faculty, and industry professionals. It covers broad themes ranging from entrepreneurship and sustainability to emerging technologies in agriculture.

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Agricultural Extension
“Evening4Learning”
Webinar Series
Aug 27-30, 2024
19.00-20.30 pm (IST)
Theme: Community Sustainable Extension Systems



Speaker

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 Dr. S. SHANAVAS

About the Speaker

Dr. S. Shanavas serves as a Technical Officer at the Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, and concurrently as the State Programme Officer (Farm Livelihoods) with the Kerala State Kudumbashree Mission. With substantial experience in startup mentoring and a strong commitment to promoting healthy and balanced lifestyles, he effectively integrates scientific rigour with market-oriented perspectives. His work is dedicated to translating scientific innovations into sustainable, high-impact solutions that create value for both consumers and the agricultural sector.

Background and Rationale

Kudumbashree is globally acknowledged as one of the largest and most impactful initiatives for women's empowerment and poverty alleviation, with a legacy of over 25 years. Launched in 1997 under the Kerala Poverty Eradication Mission, it was envisioned as an integrated, community-based programme focused on women's empowerment and poverty reduction. Over time, it has grown into what is often described as the world's largest women's collective, uniting more than 4.7 million members. Its remarkable scale and sustained success stem from a robust, community-driven institutional framework that enables effective planning, efficient implementation, and a smooth flow of information from the grassroots to higher levels of governance.

The mission's operational effectiveness is anchored in a clearly defined three-tier community framework.

At the grassroots are **Neighborhood Groups (NHGs)**, where women collectively organize, plan, and act. These NHGs are federated at the intermediate level into **Area Development Societies (ADS)**, which provide coordination, guidance, and support. At the highest tier, **Community Development Societies (CDS)** offer strategic direction and function as the key linkage with local self-governments and state-level institutions. This integrated, tiered architecture enables extensive community outreach, seamless coordination, and strong alignment with wider development goals.

Joint Liability Groups (JLGs)

Community-driven livelihood models such as Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) play a significant role in empowering women farmers and strengthening rural economies through collective farming. JLGs consist of small groups of 4–10 women who share labour, resources, responsibilities, risks, and benefits, thereby improving financial independence, agricultural income, and social participation. The programme supports farmers through training, financial assistance, and convergence with government schemes, while area incentives are provided based on cultivation area, crop type, and farming method. In addition, JLGs availing bank loans receive a 5% interest subsidy, reducing the financial burden and encouraging agricultural investment.

Initiatives Undertaken by Kudumbashree

Agri Nutri Garden

- Promotion of household and cluster-based nutrition gardens
- Addresses nutritional imbalances and enhance household food security
- Implemented through organic farming practices
- Located in backyards, leased plots, or nearby land parcels



Jaivika Plant Nurseries

- Initiative for self-sustenance in planting material production
- Women entrepreneurs supported with:
 - o Revolving fund of RS. 50,000 per unit
 - o Free technical training

Nattuchantha (Weekly Markets)

- Weekly direct marketing platforms for Kudumbashree members to sell produce without middlemen, thereby ensuring better price realization and profits

Bio Pharmacy Units

- Support system for organic cultivation inputs
- Supply of organic fertilizers, bio-pesticides, and inputs
- Financial support of Rs. 60,000 as revolving fund per unit

Green Carpet Units

- Interior and exterior decoration services run by women, promoting mobile gardening



Vegetable Kiosks

- Daily vegetable markets for producers to enhance visibility and sales



Producer Groups (PGs)

- Groups consisting of a minimum of 20 members engaged in collective farming and income generation
- Facilitate collective production, aggregation, and marketing
- Provision of revolving fund, training, and input subsidies
- Special focus on land access through leasing arrangements

Value Addition Initiatives

- Focus on small and medium-scale value addition units
- Financial support:
 - o Subsidy up to 40%
 - o Bank loan for medium scale units



Agri-Business Ventures (ABVs)

- Demand-based and seasonal cultivation (flowers, mushrooms, etc.)
- Financial assistance in the form of a 40% subsidy of up to Rs. 50,000
- Support extended across cultivation, processing, and marketing activities



Cluster Based Initiatives

Integrated Farming Clusters (IFC)

- An NRLM flagship initiative
- Establishment of Common Facility Centres (CFCs) for value addition and services

Moringa Clusters

- Promotion of moringa cultivation and value addition
- Two clusters per district with defined membership
- Production of moringa leaves, seeds, powder, and extracts

Bamboo Clusters

- Focus on bamboo cultivation, processing, and handicrafts

Emerging and Innovative Initiatives

Agri-Startups

- Empowerment of grassroots entrepreneurs
- Utilization of local resources for innovative agri-products
- District-level incubation and nurturing of startups
- Focus on employment generation and enterprise sustainability

Punarjeevam - Kudumbashree's Entrepreneurship Development Programme

- Upskilling existing trained members in agriculture and allied sectors
- Started in Palakkad district and planned for statewide rollout
- Focus on new livelihood opportunities and advanced skills



Agri Drones

- Deployment of agricultural drones under the NRLM initiative
- Services in crop management, fisheries, and remote sensing
- Training women operators and providing licensing support

KabizNest (Agri-Business Networking through Students)

- A visionary programme to connect youth and students with Kudumbashree agri-business
- Encourages innovation and inter-generational knowledge transfer

The initiatives of Kudumbashree represent a strong and successful model of community-based agricultural extension. By effectively utilizing local resources, encouraging collective participation, and strengthening grassroots capacities, the mission promotes sustainable development throughout the state. These integrated efforts enhance the livelihoods of farmers and entrepreneurs while fostering resilient and self-reliant communities that contribute significantly to the socioeconomic development of Kerala.

The organization's continuous growth and adaptive approach highlight its commitment to innovation, inclusiveness, and empowerment, with the aim of creating opportunities for every community member to achieve sustainable progress and prosperity.

Key Highlights

- Kudumbashree is globally recognized as one of the most successful women's empowerment and poverty alleviation missions, with over 25 years of impact and more than 4.7 million women members organized through a strong three-tier community network of NHGs, ADSs, and CDSs.
- Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) promote collective farming by bringing together 4–10 women farmers to share resources, labour, risks, and benefits. The initiative enhances women's financial independence through training programmes, subsidies, financial assistance, and a 5% interest subsidy on bank loans.
- Kudumbashree supports sustainable agriculture through initiatives such as Agri Nutri Gardens, Jaivika Plant Nurseries, Bio Pharmacy Units, Producer Groups, Vegetable Kiosks, and weekly markets (Nattuchantha), ensuring improved food security, organic farming promotion, and better market access for women farmers.
- The mission encourages enterprise development through value addition units, Agri-Business Ventures (ABVs), agri-startups, and entrepreneurship programmes like Punarjeevam, providing subsidies, incubation support, skill development, and market linkages for sustainable income generation.
- Kudumbashree promotes innovative and cluster-based initiatives such as Integrated Farming Clusters, Moringa Clusters, Bamboo Clusters, Agri Drones, and KabizNest, integrating technology, youth participation, and sustainable resource utilization to strengthen Kerala's rural economy and community resilience.

YouTube Link:

<https://youtu.be/n3062mqYYIQ?list=PL6mI4tMrzHzTHqX8i3oQ6o-B4Pfc5gPQs&t=1>

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