

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PLANNING**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2302  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26.12.2018**

**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

**2302. SHRI NALIN KUMAR KATEEL:  
SHRI D. K. SURESH:**

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is true that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer a historic opportunity to pursue transformational measures to ensure equality for every woman and girl, everywhere in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government has taken note of the fact that women's economic empowerment is central to the achievement of the SDGs and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND  
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS**

**(RAO INDERJIT SINGH)**

- (a) Yes, Madam.
- (b) The issue of equality for every woman and girl is covered under the SDG 5, which reads, "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." Focusing on gender equality, the Targets under the Goal focus on a number of areas important for women and girls, such as, ending all forms of discrimination (5.1), eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls (5.2); eliminating all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage (5.3); and also valuing unpaid care and domestic work (5.4). Further, it is widely recognized that without addressing the issues of equality of women and girls, the SDGs are unlikely to be achieved. Some of the critical areas under other SDGs, for instance, are: ensuring equal access to economic resources for women (SDG 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere); access of girls and women to nutritious food and health care (SDG 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture) and SDG 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages); access to education at all levels (SDG 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong

learning opportunities for all); and creating access to decent jobs (SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all).

(c) The Government has taken note of the fact that women’s economic empowerment is central to the achievement of the SDGs. Several major programmes reflect increasing benefits to women. Some illustrative examples are given below. Under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the trend regarding women taking up more than 50 percent of jobs is continuing since 2013-14. The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY) seeks to reach out to 8-10 crore rural poor households in a phased manner by 2024-25 and organize one woman member from each household into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) or SHG federations, which have proved to be successful vehicles of women’s economic empowerment. So far more than 5.6 crore households have been mobilized into SHGs and revolving fund support amounting to Rs. 2,412 crore has been provided to the SHGs. Further, the Government has brought several sweeping changes in terms of labour reforms for the benefit of women workers including the establishment of Mahila e-Haat and Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017. The Mahila e-Haats provide an online market place to approximately 3.75 lakh women entrepreneurs to market their products online. Under the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017, maternity leave is enhanced for up to six months.

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