

## Impact of drudgery reducing technologies on work efficiency and health security of farm women

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Rural women play a vital role in farm and home stead activities. Women's participation in agro-based activities is much more than what statistics reveal. They do the most tedious and back breaking tasks in the physical aspect of farming, live stock management, post-harvest management and allied activities. These tasks not only demand considerable time and energy but also are sources of drudgery for rural women which are not yet precisely been identified and quantified. Involvement in these drudgery prone activities also affect the health of farm women which adversely affect their working efficiency and family welfare. Hence, some drudgery reducing technologies such as envirofit chulha, groundnut decorticator, hand wheel hoe weeder, lemon harvester and cloth gloves for harvesting of chickpea were distributed to twenty farm women each for each tool in five villages of Bijapur taluk, Karnataka. These new technologies reduced the drudgery of farm women, increased their work efficiency, saved time, labour expenses and provided health security. These new technologies were found to be more efficient, labour saving, time saving, reduced drudgery and provided health security.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Drudgery reduction, Work efficiency, Health security

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Rural women play a vital role in farm and home stead activities. Women's participation in agro-based activities is much more than what statistics reveal. They form 50 per cent of population and constitute 60 per cent of work force but earn only 10 per cent of income. They do the most tedious and back breaking tasks in the physical aspect of farming, live stock management, post harvest management and allied activities. These tasks not only demand considerable time and energy but also are sources of drudgery for rural women which are not yet been precisely identified and quantified. Involvement in these drudgery prone activities also affect the health of farm women which adversely affect their working efficiency and family welfare. Hence, this study was carried out to study the impact of some of the drudgery reducing technologies on work efficiency and health security of farm women.

The study was carried out in five villages of Bijapur taluk, Karnataka. The drudgery reducing technologies were

groundnut decorticator, envirofit chulha, hand wheel hoe weeder with tynes, lemon harvester and cloth gloves for harvesting of chickpea. These improved tools were distributed to twenty farm women each for each tool and demonstration was given on how to use these tools. Thus, totally one hundred farm women were selected for the study. Improvement in work efficiency was calculated using the formula  $\text{demo} - \text{check} : \text{check} \times 100$ .

The results of Table 1 reveal the comparison made between traditional and improved tools. The farm women expressed that by using groundnut decorticator, they could decorticate 9.20 kg./hr of groundnut compared to the traditional method of decorticating groundnut by hand (4.69 kg./hr). It was found that 96.16 per cent of extra pods could be decorticated using the decorticator. Comparison between the chulhas revealed that by using envirofit chulha, 5.2 kg/day of fuel wood was utilized compared to traditional chulha where 7.5 kg./day of fuel wood was utilized. It was found that 30.66