

## WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN SMALL SECTOR TEA CULTIVATION IN NORTH BENGAL AREAS IN INDIA

AVRAJYOTI GHOSH<sup>1</sup>, P. K. PAL<sup>2</sup>, A. GHOSH<sup>3</sup>, SABITA MONDAL<sup>4</sup> & B. SAHA<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sr. Technical Officer, ICAR-Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (Research Center), Po-Mohitnagar,  
Dist. - Jalpaiguri, Wb. India

<sup>2,4</sup>Associate Professor, (Agrl. Extension), Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya. PO. Pundibari,  
Dist.-Cooch Behar, Wb. India

<sup>3</sup>Associate Professor, (Agril. Statistics), Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya. PO. Pundibari,  
Dist.-Cooch Behar, Wb. India

<sup>5</sup>Assistant Professor, (S.S) (Extension Education), College of Fishery, Central Agricultural  
University Lembuchera, Agartala, Tripura

### ABSTRACT

Women's role as an active worker producer is rarely acknowledged though it is significant for the family's survival. In the present context male members of the farm families are willing to quit agricultural profession if they get scope. They migrate to urban areas in search of new job opportunities. So, women are increasingly becoming the prime agriculturist; although with little rights, authority, access to or control over resources. Tea plantation industry is a labour intensive one and women workers constitute the majority of workers of tea industry in India; but discussions on female workers and their role in decision-making processes are rarely addressed. The present study was undertaken as a part of the Ph.D. study (2011-14) to assess the actual participation of women in small tea sector in activity and decision making in respect of male workforce. A construct (Participation Index—Activity/Decision) was used to assess and compare the level of participation (Participation Index value=0 means no participation and 1 means 100% participation by the female). High Average Activity Index of female was observed in case of plucking (0.82) and weeding (0.42) whereas in case of fertilizer application, irrigation and spraying, low Activity Index was observed as 0.01, 0.01 and 0.00 respectively. In case of decision also female Average Decision Index was 0.26 and 0.13 respectively which is considered as low. In other areas, they had extremely minimum levels of participation. In both activity and decision making spheres, male members had significantly higher participation than women workforce.

**KEYWORDS:** Index, North Bengal, Participation, Small Tea Growers, Tea, Women