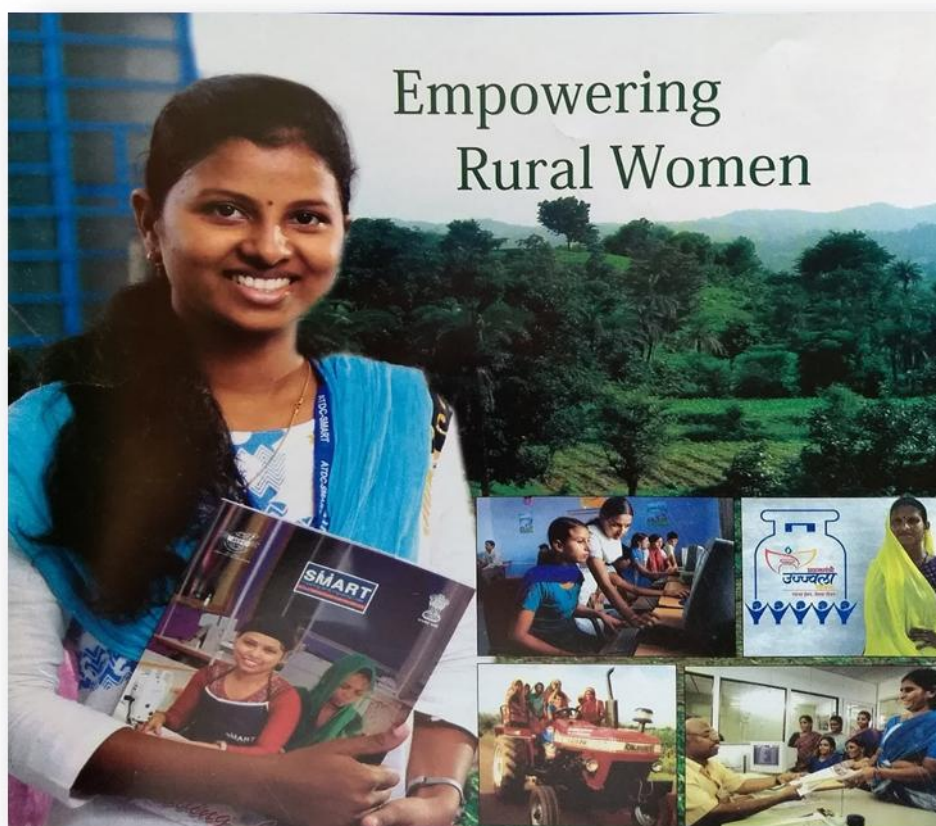


Kurukshetra

Empowering rural women

The way forward



Rural women constitute a large proportion of population in rural India .The crucial role that women and girls play in ensuring the sustainability of rural households and communities, improving rural livelihoods and overall wellbeing, has been increasingly recognized.

- Women account for a substantial proportion of the agricultural labour force, including informal work, and perform the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work within families and households in rural areas.
- They make significant contributions to agricultural production, food security and nutrition, land and natural resource management, and building climate resilience.
- Around 60% of India's population is engaged in farming.
- Rural women are key agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development

Challenges for rural women

- **Poor education:** Many attributes of rural women is their low level of educational attainment. Rural women often suffer from high illiteracy rates and high drop-out rates from schools. Illiteracy also impedes their access to skill up-gradation and capacity building programs, access to credit etc.
- **Digital literacy:** Poor access to information Technology (IT) by rural women intensifies existing inequalities between women and men and also creates new forms of inequalities in education and health.
- **Poor access to technologies:** Access to women friendly technologies/implements and services by the government schemes/agriculture extension in poor.
- **Lack of skills:** While rural women are involved in micro/small enterprises or manufacturing, most training programmes hardly have any female participation.

Government effort :

Deen Dayal Upadhyay Antyodaya Yojana (DAY-NRLM) ,Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY) with an aim to uplift the urban poor folks by enhancing sustainable livelihood opportunities through skill development. Keeping in view the objective of **Make in India, Skill Development** is essential for socio economic betterment.

Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana was launched under January 2018 the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (HUPA). Government of India has provisioned Rs.500 crore for the scheme.

Component Of Day-Nulm

- The scheme has **two component** one for urban India and other for rural India.
- ✓ The Urban component named as **Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana** will be implemented by the Ministry of Housing and **Urban Poverty Alleviation**.
- ✓ The rural component named as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya **Grameen Kaushalya** Yojana will be implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development. Main highlights of the scheme
- ✓ **Employment through Skill Training and Placement** - An expenditure of Rs.15, 000 per person is allowed on training of urban poor which is Rs.18, 000 in North-East and J&K. Moreover, Training urban poor to meet the enormous demand from urban citizens by imparting market-oriented skills through City Livelihood Centers.
- ✓ **Social Mobilization and Institution Development** - It will be done through formation of Self-Help Groups (SHG) for training members and hand holding, an initial support of 10, 000 is given for each group. Assistance of Rs.50, 000 is provided to Registered Area Level Federations.
- ✓ **Subsidy to urban poor** - An interest subsidy of 5% - 7% for setting up individual micro-enterprises with a loan of up to 2 lakh and for group enterprises with a loan limit of up to Rs.10 lakhs.
- ✓ **Shelters for urban homeless** - Cost of construction of shelters for urban homeless is fully funded under the Scheme.

- ✓ **Other means** - Development of vendor markets and also the promotion of skills for the vendors through setting up infrastructure and special projects for the rag picker and differently abled etc.

Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana” (MKSP)

The “**Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana**” (MKSP), a sub component of the Deendayal Antodaya Yojana-NRLM (DAY-NRLM) seeks to improve the present status of women in Agriculture, and to enhance the opportunities available to empower her.

Focus and strategy

- MKSP recognizes the identity of “**Mahila**” as “**Kisan**” and strives to build the capacity of women in the domain of agro-ecologically sustainable practices. It has a clear vision to reach out to the poorest of poor households and expand the portfolio of activities currently handled by the Mahila Kisan.
- The focus of MKSP is on capacitating smallholders to adopt sustainable climate resilient agro-ecology and eventually create a pool of skilled community professionals.

Objective

- ✓ To strengthen smallholder agriculture through promotion of sustainable agriculture practices such as Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture (CMSA), Non-Pesticide Management (NPM), Zero Budget
- ✓ Natural Farming (ZBNF), Pashu-Sakhi model for doorstep animal care services, Sustainable regeneration and harvesting of Non-Timber Forest Produce.

Empowering Elected Women Representative (EWRs)

A million women have been elected at the village, block and district levels, following the landmark 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India (1992), reserving 33 percent of the seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions for women. The process of decentralization has provided representation but representation does not necessarily lead to participation.

Women still face a number of challenges for their engagement in political spaces such as inadequate education, lack of financial independence, burden of productive and reproductive roles and opposition stemming from entrenched patriarchal views.

A comprehensive module for capacity building of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Panchayats and a training program for Trainers of women panchayat leaders across the country was launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Panchayat Raj

The training program was launched at Ranchi, Jharkhand through a video conference, by the Minister of Women & Child Development, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi in the presence of Minister of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar in New Delhi.

The project aimed to

- Build capacities of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) for effective functioning and setting of women's agenda.

- Institutionalize mechanisms to strengthen capacity building of EWRs to better understand and perform their functions.
- Mobilize community and strengthen processes of constituency building to enable women to articulate their voices and participate in the electoral process.

Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK),

- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), established in 1993 is a national level organization as an autonomous body under the aegis of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, for socio-economic empowerment of women.

Vision : To be a financial service and capacity enhancement institution for social and economic empowerment of poor and marginalized women

Mission : To be a single window facilitator for provision of financial services with backward and forward linkages for women in the unorganized sector through Intermediary Micro Finance Organizations (IMOs) and Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) and to augment their capacities through multi-pronged efforts.

Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK)

Government of India has approved a new scheme namely, Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) for 2017-18 upto 2019-20 to **empower rural women through community participation** and to create an environment in which they realize their full potential.

Under the **scheme 3 lakh student volunteers** are to be mobilized to reach out to rural women.

These student volunteers will facilitate opportunities for

- ✓ Skill development
- ✓ Employment
- ✓ Digital literacy
- ✓ Health and Nutrition

Other aspects

- 115 most backward districts to be reached with 920 Mahila Shakti Kendra
- District level centres for women (DLCW) to be set up in 640 districts
- **Ajeevika Skills:** Making Rural Poor Youth Employable
- Aajeevika- National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) is an initiative launched by Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011.

Key Features

- Provides customized residential and non-residential training
- Minimum 624 hours of training with modules on trade specific skills, IT and soft skills.
- Special programs for Jammu and Kashmir, Minorities and Most Critical Left-Wing Extremist Districts
- Implemented under the supervision of the central and state governments
- **75% assured** placement above minimum wages

Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)

About Scheme

The Ministry has been administering 'Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) Scheme' since 1986-87 as a '**Central Sector Scheme**'.

The STEP Scheme aims to provide skills that give employability to women and to provide competencies and skill that enable women to become self-employed/entrepreneurs.

The Scheme is intended to benefit women who are in the age group of 16 years and above across the country. The grant under the Scheme is given to an institution/ organisation including NGOs directly and not the States/ UTs.

One Stop Centre Scheme

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a global health, human rights and development issue that transcends geography, class, culture, age, race and religion to affect every community and country in every corner of the world.

Objective

- **One Stop Centres (OSC)** are intended to support women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace.
- Women facing physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic abuse, irrespective of age, class, caste, education status, marital status, race and culture will be facilitated with support and redressal.
- Aggrieved women facing any kind of violence due to attempted sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, trafficking, honour related crimes, acid attacks or witch-hunting who have reached out or been referred to the OSC will be provided with specialized services.

Role of education in empowering women

Mahatma Gandhi once said "*If you educate a women, you educate a whole family.*"

Free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 6 and 14 is a fundamental right of citizen. The government, through its various initiatives such as the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan attempts to improve the education of women.

How?

- **Education liberates:** Education liberates the mind. Whether you're studying the sciences, history, literature, languages or social sciences, you are gaining knowledge. You are educating yourself about the world, about how nature, people and nations work.
- **Education breaks down barriers:** Education enables us to break down all barriers- religious, linguistic, cultural, political, gender and geographical. An educated woman will not discriminate others on the basis of these barriers- she will treat everyone the same, and work with them.

- **Education allows the privilege of choice:** As education opens up new worlds to women, it will enable them to make their own choices, in everything- whether it be lifestyle, career, life-partner, sexuality, food etc.
- **Educated women contributes to economy:** Imagine a nation where women are qualified and are able to get jobs. The contribution to the workforce will enhance the output, and therefore, the economy will develop.

Benefits of educating women :

- ✓ If all children enjoyed equal access to education, per capita income would increase by 23% over 40 years.
- ✓ If all women had a primary education, child marriages and child mortality could fall by a sixth, and material deaths by two-third.
- ✓ Education promotes tolerance.
- ✓ Education equality improves job opportunities and increase economic growth.

Constitutional provisions and laws :

Article 14 Men and women to have equal rights and opportunities in the political, economic and social spheres.

Article 15(1) Prohibits discrimination against any citizens on the grounds of religion, race, sex, caste and gender.

Article 16 Equality of opportunities in matter of public appointments for all citizens

Article 39(d) Equal pay for equal work for both men and women

Article 42 The state to make provision for ensuring first and humane condition of work and maternity relief.

The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 which provides for women the right to parental property.

National Policy for Women 2016

Salient features of the National policy for women empowerment

- To create a society with women working as equal partners in all spheres of life
- To develop a framework to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women
- To make cyber space a safe place for women and to address "redistribution of gender roles, for reducing unpaid care work, review of personal and customary laws in accordance with the Constitutional provisions and many more.
- It also seeks to review the criminalisation of marital rape keeping women's rights in mind
- Health and education of women have been kept a priority in the proposed draft

The draft has proposed to "improve access to pre-primary education, enrolment and retention of adolescent girls."

- To carry out skill development and provide equal employment opportunities
- To provide suitable benefits related to maternity and child care services

- The draft plans to increase women's participation in the political, administration, civil services and corporate boardrooms arena
- To address all forms of violence against women
- To improve child sex ratio (CSR)
- To prevent trafficking at source, transit and destination areas for effective monitoring of the networks
- Operational strategies
- To enable safety and security of women with the help of "One Stop Centres, Women Helpline, Mahila Police Volunteers, Reservation of women in police force, Panic buttons in mobiles, Surveillance mechanisms in public places."

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013

It lays down detailed definitions of what constitutes as a workplace, and takes into account both organized and unorganized sector.

The act further makes it mandatory for employers to constitute an 'Internal complaints committee' if there are more than 10 employees, to handle cases of sexual harassment at the workplace.

Sexual harassment includes many things

- ✓ Actual or attempted rape or sexual assault
- ✓ Unwanted deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering, or pinching.
- ✓ Unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions.
- ✓ Whistling at someone.
- ✓ Kissing sounds, howling, and smacking lips.
- ✓ Touching an employee's clothing, hair, or body
- ✓ Touching or rubbing oneself sexually around another person.

Who is a Harasser and who is Harassed?

It is commonly thought that workplace sexual harassment is limited to interactions between male bosses and female subordinates. This is not true. In fact, sexual harassment can occur between any co-workers, including the following

- ✓ Subordinate harassment of a superior;
- ✓ Men can be sexually harassed by women;
- ✓ Same sex harassment- men can harass men; women can harass women;
- ✓ Offenders can be supervisors, co-workers, or non-employees such as customers, vendors, and suppliers

Swadhar Greh-A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances

It envisages that shelter, food, clothing, and health as well as economic and social security are assured for such women. It also envisions that the special needs of these women are properly taken care of

and under no circumstances they should be left unattended or abandoned which could lead to their exploitation and desolation

Objectives

Under the Scheme, Swadhar Greh will be set up in every district with capacity of 30 women with the following objectives

- ✓ To cater to the primary need of shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment and care of the women in distress and who are without any social and economic support.
- ✓ To enable them to regain their emotional strength that gets hampered due to their encounter with unfortunate circumstances.
- ✓ To provide them with legal aid and guidance to enable them to take steps for their readjustment in family/society.
- ✓ To rehabilitate them economically and emotionally
- ✓ To act as a support system that understands and meets various requirements of women in distress.
- ✓ To enable them to start their life afresh with dignity and conviction.
- ✓ For big cities and other districts having more than 40 lakh population or those districts where there is a need for additional support to the women, more than one Swadhar Greh could be established.

Beneficiaries

- ✓ Women who are deserted and are without any social and economic support;
 - ✓ Women survivors of natural disasters who have been rendered homeless and are without any social and economic support;
 - ✓ Women prisoners released from jail and are without family, social and economic support;
 - ✓ Women victims of domestic violence, family tension or discord, who are made to leave their homes without any means of subsistence and have no special protection from exploitation and/ or facing litigation on account of marital disputes; and
 - ✓ Trafficked women/girls rescued or runaway from brothels or other places where they face exploitation and Women affected by HIV/AIDS who do not have any social or economic support. However such women/girls should first seek assistance under UJJAWALA Scheme in areas where it is in operation.
- Few governments initiative for women education

Sakshar Bharat mission for Female Literacy

This programme was formulated in 2009 with the objective of achieving 80% literacy level at national level, by focusing on adult women literacy seeking – to reduce the gap between male and female literacy to not more than 10 percentage points.

Objectives

- ✓ Imparting functional literacy and numeracy to non-literates
- ✓ Acquiring equivalency to formal educational system.
- ✓ Imparting relevant skill development programme.
- ✓ Promote a learning society by providing opportunities for continuing education.

The principal target of the programme is to impart functional literacy to 70 million non-literate adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) is a scheme launched in July 2004, for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minority communities.

The scheme is being implemented in educationally backward blocks of the country where the female rural literacy is below the national average and gender gap in literacy is above the national average. The scheme provides for a minimum reservation of 75% of the seats for girls belonging to SC, ST, OBC or minority communities and priority for the remaining 25%, is accorded to girls from families below poverty line.

Dhanlakshmi scheme

This is a conditional cash transfer scheme for the girl child with insurance cover which would go a long way towards ensuring the survival of the girl child and assuring a better life for her.

The direct and tangible objective of the scheme is to provide a set of financial incentives for families to encourage them to retain a girl child, educate her and prevent child marriage.

Health of rural women-Wealth of Nation

Rural women experience poorer health outcomes and have less access to health care than urban women.

Currently, women in India has to face numerous health issues, which ultimately affect the aggregate economy's output. Addressing the gender, class or ethnic disparities that exist in healthcare and improving the health outcomes can contribute to economic gain through the creation of quality human capital and increased levels of savings and investment.

Problems with India's healthcare system

At the turn of the 21st Century India's health care system is strained in terms of the number of healthcare professionals including doctors and nurses.

The health care system is also highly concentrated in urban areas.

This results in many individuals in rural areas seeking care from unqualified providers with varying results. It has also been found that many individuals who claim to be physicians actually lack formal training. Nearly 25 percent of physicians classified as allopathic providers actually had no medical training; this phenomenon varies geographically.

Women are negatively affected by the geographic bias within implementation of the current healthcare system in India. Of all health workers in the country, nearly two thirds are men.

This especially affects rural areas where it has been found that out of all doctors, only 6 percent are women.

This translates into approximately 0.5 female allopathic physicians per 10,000 individuals in rural areas. A disparity in access to maternal care between rural and urban populations is one of the ramifications of a highly concentrated urban medical system. According to Government of India National Family Health

Survey (NFHS II, 1998-1999) the maternal mortality in rural areas is approximately 132 percent the number of maternal mortality in urban areas.

The Indian government has taken steps to alleviate some of the current gender inequalities. In 1992, the government of India established the **National Commission for Women**.

The Commission was meant to address many of the inequalities women face, specifically rape, family and guardianship. However, the slow pace of change in the judicial system and the aforementioned cultural norms have prevented the full adoption of policies meant to promote equality between men and women.

In 2005 India enacted the **National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)**. Some of its primary goals were to reduce infant mortality and also the maternal mortality ratio. Additionally,

The NHRM aimed to create universal access to public health services and also balance the gender ratio. However, a 2011 research study conducted by Nair and Panda found that although India was able to improve some measures of maternal health since the enactment of the NHRM in 2005, the country was still far behind most emerging economies.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

Under - nutrition continues to adversely affect majority of women in India. In India, every third woman is undernourished and every second woman is anaemic.

An undernourished mother almost inevitably gives birth to a low birth weight baby. When poor nutrition starts in - utero, it extends throughout the life cycle since the changes are largely irreversible. Owing to economic and social distress many women continue to work to earn a living for their family right up to the last days of their pregnancy.

Furthermore, they resume working soon after childbirth, even though their bodies might not permit it, thus preventing their bodies from fully recovering on one hand, and also impeding their ability to exclusively breastfeed their young infant in the first six months.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) is a Maternity Benefit Programme that is implemented in all the districts of the country in accordance with the provision of the National Food Security Act, 2013.

Objectives

- ✓ Providing partial compensation for the wage loss in terms of cash incentive s so that the woman can take adequate res t before and after delivery of the first living child.
- ✓ The cash incentive provided would lead to improved health seeking behaviour amongst the Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW& LM).

Benefits under PMMVY

- ✓ Cash incentive of Rs 5000 in three instalments i.e. first instalment of Rs 1000/- on early registration of pregnancy at the Anganwadi Centre (AWC) / approved Health facility as may be identified by the respective administering State / UT, second instalment of Rs 2000/- after six months of pregnancy on receiving at least one ante-natal check-up (ANC) and third instalment of Rs 2000/- after child birth is registered and the child has received the first cycle of BCG, OPV, DPT and Hepatitis - B, or its equivalent/ substitute.

✓ The eligible beneficiaries would receive the incentive given under the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) for Institutional delivery and the incentive received under JSY would be accounted towards maternity benefits so that on an average a woman gets Rs 6000 / -.

SABLA: Scheme for Adolescent Girls

Sabla-a Centrally sponsored scheme aims at empowering Adolescent Girl (AGs) (11-18 years) through nutrition, health care and life skill education.

Objectives

- ✓ Enable the AGs for self-development and empowerment
- ✓ Improve their nutrition and health status
- ✓ Promote awareness about health, hygiene, nutrition, Adolescent Reproductive and sexual health (ARSH) and family and childcare.
- ✓ Upgrade their home-based skills, life skills and tie up with National Skill Development Program
- ✓ Mainstream out of school AGs into formal/non formal education

Services to be provided under SABLA

- ✓ Nutrition provision
- ✓ Iron & Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation
- ✓ Health check-up and Referral services
- ✓ Nutrition and health education
- ✓ Life Skill Education and accessing public services

Folk Arts as a tool for development

“India is the cradle of human race, the birthplace of human speech, mother of history, grandmother of legends, and great grandmother of tradition”

Mark Twain

Madhubani Paintings

Paintings and art often reflect the culture and tradition of the place from which they originate. They tend to be a reflection of the times in which the art was created. Rarely does an ancient art form become a reflection of modern times and issues.

Yet a drive on Highway 52 of the Madhubani district or Ranti village in Bihar will tell you how Madhubani art that originated about 2500 years ago is still very much thriving.

Not only that, it has managed to save an entire forest and put the spotlight on some very pressing women's issues! Take a look at the history of Madhubani paintings and how they have evolved over the years.

What's so special about Madhubani?

So how are these paintings made?

Interestingly, Mithila or Madhubani paintings are done using fingers and twigs as well as matchsticks and pen nibs in the modern day.

Usually bright colours are used in these paintings with an outline made from rice paste as its framework. There are rarely any blank spaces in these paintings.

If there's a border, it is embellished with geometric and floral patterns. Natural dyes are used for the paintings. For example, charcoal and soot for black, turmeric extract for yellow, red from sandalwood, blue from indigo and so on.

Madhubani art in present times

Madhubani painting is still practiced by many women in Ranti village of Bihar. In fact, Karpuri Devi, sister-in-law of known artist Mahasundari Devi, Dulari, and Mahalaxmi are women from three generations of the village who have made extensive efforts to keep the art form alive by educating other women in the village and teaching them how to make Mithila painting a way of life and take the legacy forward. Works of the three women have been commissioned by the government of India and also found a place in the Mithila museum of Japan.

These women aim to empower other women through painting and creating awareness on issues like education and eve-teasing.

They are encouraging their students to paint on topics that are closer to their hearts – anything from folk tales they might have heard during their childhood to the status of women in the society today. It is interesting to note how paintings that were done by women to depict religion, traditions and social norms are now being used by them to make their voices heard.

- i) Commercialisation:** Taking it on mass scale will generate employment opportunities as well as make the artists financially sound.
- ii) Skill Development and Training:** Since these arts forms have potential, they are likely to have high demand in future
- iii) Promoting art at public places:** Public places are highly beneficial for drawing one's attention so as to make it popular and to showcase the beauty of arts.
- iv) Digitisation of artwork:** It will give make it easier for an artist to reach national and international audience.

Measures that will be helpful in promotion and preservation of traditional arts .