

## GAUTHAN – MULTI ACTIVITY CENTRES FOR LIVELIHOOD GENERATION IN CHHATTISGARH

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**In a nutshell:** Multi activity centers that create livelihood for local women through the involvement of women's SHGs.

**Nodal agency:** District administration Bijapur, Korba, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh

Rural economy of Chhattisgarh has got a new impetus with the Gothan and Godhan Nyay scheme launched in 2020 for the conservation and promotion of livestock. The unutilized disposable cow-dung procured by the Chhattisgarh government from livestock owners and villagers has opened employment opportunities and has the potential to boost the rural economy. The activities carried out at Gauthans (cattle shed premises) include creation of super compost, vermicompost, mushroom plantation, and horticulture-related activities

Additionally, these centres allow flexibility for further activities, albeit on a smaller scale. For instance, in Bijapur, Gauthan in Bhairamgarh run by SHGs supplies eggs to Anganwadi centres, sells manure to farmers after composting, and has also utilised the remaining land to construct a recharge pit and enable vegetable cultivation.

A 'Gauthan Map' (multi activity and livelihood management) mobile app that will carry every detail on cow dung procurement, working of Gauthan, outputs of self help groups, infrastructure and the database of such cattle sheds set up across the State is in the works.

In a Gauthan, massive vermicompost manures have been diversified, creating varieties of useful products from cow dung. Ahead of Deepawali, hundreds of women led SHGs got orders to supply lakhs of eco-friendly diyas (earthen lamps) besides some other products made from cow dung to different cities of the country.

Along with the colourful Diwali diyas of different sizes, idols of Gods, mobile and candle stands, name plates, slippers, key chains, flowerpots, incense sticks, herbal Gulal for Holi festival among others are being supplied in bulk in markets. The process to make paints, pen, cement and bricks using cow dung has also begun.

It is noteworthy that Chhattisgarh Government is the only government in the country that is procuring cow dung from the cattle rearers in rural areas of the state for last two years. The cow dung procured is then used in the manufacture of vermicompost and super compost.

### Impact

- Cow dung worth more than Rs 116 crore has been purchased in Gauthans under the Godhan Nyay Yojana.

- The production of Vermi Compost and Super Compost is being done on a major scale in about 7800 Gauthans of the State by the women's groups from the purchased cow dung.
- The cost of compost manure produced and sold to date is over Rs 100 crore<sup>7</sup>.
- Under the Godhan Nyay Yojana, people from all sections of society are selling cow dung in Gauthan at Rs 2 a kg. In the last two years, an amount of more than Rs 300 crore has been transferred to the accounts of cow dung vendors, Gauthan committees and women's groups through the scheme.
- The initiative is not only an excellent solution for farming and livelihood but also reduces the problem of decreasing fertility of the land due to indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture.
- Many problems like toxicity, damage to the environment and global warming can be reduced to a great extent.



Gauthan in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh



Women making compost in a Gauthan

<sup>7</sup>As of December, 2021