UNIT 15 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

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**15.1 INTRODUCTION**

The country’s half of the population is women. So, uplift of the nation is not possible without equal rights and development of the women. For this, the women will have to be given scope for becoming self-reliant by educating them side by side with the males and their overall empowerment will have to be ensured. There are various development approaches and policies to bring women on par with men. Affirmative action is one such strategy to provide necessary support to women to bring holistic development.
15.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you would be able to

- Discuss the need for affirmative action;
- Analyse the various measures taken by the government of India; and
- List the schemes related to women and entrepreneurship.

15.3 WHY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION NEEDED FOR WOMEN IN INDIA

We have already discussed elaborately on status and position of women in Unit 1 of MGS-003. Since the beginning of the UN Decade for Women, women activists and scholars have systematically brought to light the oppression, exploitation and marginalization of Indian women in all walks of life. The benchmark of this exercise was the Status of Women in India Report of 1974. But one of the Constitution of India’s objectives is the attainment of equality of status for women. This is implicitly stated in the directive principles of state policy, the preamble and the fundamental rights. The 1974 Government of India Status of Women in India Report defines status as the relative position of persons in a social system or sub-system which is distinguishable from that of others through its rights and obligations. Each status position is expressed in terms of a role. Since each individual occupies a number of distinct status within a society, he/she performs a variety of roles. It is imperative to make a distinction between the ideal role behaviour/expected role behaviour and actual role behaviour. The divergence between these leads to a change in the role perception of individuals. Status is realized through roles. This brings into focus the rights and opportunities provided to women by the states and socio-cultural institutions to perform these roles, which may not necessarily reinforce each other. Processes of change are responsible for divergence between the expected and the actual role behaviour.

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The role played by economic, social, cultural and political institutions in reinforcing subordination was highlighted in the Status of Women in India Report 1974. But constant efforts were taken by the women’s movement to highlight the plight of women. The Government of India has taken many efforts like the national perspective plan for women, a national commission for women, women targeted programmes and many laws related to women empowerment. Efforts have also been taken to collect gender sensitized data in the census and national sample surveys.

But the constant efforts of government agencies and other players have not given fruitful results. Some insights into why this was the case was provided by feminist critiques of state-led development strategies and even NGO grassroot interventions, which generally failed to make any significant dent on the status of women. The approaches used in most programmes targeted women. The welfare, poverty alleviation, and managerial approaches, for example, did not address the underlying structural factors which perpetuated the oppression and exploitation of poor women. They failed to distinguish between condition and position of women. According to Young’s theory condition is a material state like wages, nutrition, access to education, access to health etc. But position is the social, economic and legal status of women as compared with men. Young further argued that most development initiatives concentrate on the condition of women and not on the position of women.

Maxine Moloneux made a similar distinction between women’s ‘practical’ and ‘strategic’ interests. While women’s practical needs of food, health, water, fuel, child care, education, improved technology etc have to be met, they cannot be an end in themselves; mobilizing and organizing women to fulfill their long term strategic interests is essential. This involves “analysis of women’s subordination and… the formulation of an alternative,

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more satisfactory set of arrangements to those that exist… such as the abolition of the sexual division of labour, the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and child care, the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination, the establishment of political equality, freedom of choice over child bearing and … measures against male violence and control over women. “Amartya Sen classified the inequality as follows:

1. Survival inequality
2. Natality inequality
3. Unequal facilities
4. Ownership inequality
5. Unequal sharing of household benefits and chores
6. Domestic violence and physical victimization.

He further argued that inequality between women and men can appear in many different forms. It has many faces. For example, Japan has no particular gender bias in nutrition or health care or school education, but men do seem to have considerable relative advantage in securing high leadership position in administration or business. Not only in theoretical perspectives, the existing data also shows the differences in different fields and sectors. To bring the gender equality and equity in all areas and sectors and making women and men to have equal access and control over resources, there is a need for affirmative action.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i. Use this space given below to answer the question.

   ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit

1. Discuss the status of women.

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2. Why is Affirmative Action needed for women in India?

15.4 EMPOWERING WOMEN

As we have already seen in the Course MGSE-013, there are frameworks and field level activities to empower women in the area of socio, economic and political. With regard to economic empowerment, it is the capacity of women and men to participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth processes in ways which recognise the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth. Economic empowerment increases women’s access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information.

There are different areas where gender responsive public policies are necessary.

Public Financial Management

Ultimately, a country’s success in empowering women will depend on a multi-faceted and responsive approach to its public policy management and implementation, including its macro-economic, financial and trade policies. Public financial management (PFM) covers a country’s entire budget cycle from strategic planning to audit oversight. To support women’s economic empowerment, it is essential to incorporate a gender equality perspective into PFM systems. Gender-responsive PFM ensures that resources are efficiently allocated based on identified needs, and revenues and expenditures are structured to benefit both women and men. For example, in the Philippines, a minimum of 5% of national and local government budgets is expected to be allocated to activities supporting gender equality. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has been able to mobilise the funds needed to address organisational concerns and to ensure capacity for research, design and monitoring of gender equality projects in the department.
**Social protection**

Social protection enhances the capacity of poor and vulnerable people to escape from poverty and to better manage risks and shocks. Social protection measures include social insurance, cash transfers and minimum labour standards. Public works schemes such as the Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia can help to reduce gender inequalities in the household, in the labour market and at community level.

**Trade policies**

Opening up trade opportunities so that they benefit women remains a challenge. Trade liberalisation and the changing characteristics of economic activity have created benefits for women but to a lesser degree than for men. Reasons for this are women’s limited access to resources and institutional and societal factors, determined to a large extent by informal institutions. Gender equality focused donor investments in trade support and in building trade policy capability are relatively low. One overlooked group is informal cross-border traders - the majority of whom are women. They lack legal frameworks and face challenging, hostile working environments, including poor transportation, complicated customs procedures and the lack of safe and cheap accommodation. Ironically, because women are more persistent in enduring harassment by border officials, they actually seem to cope with the challenges of informal cross-border trade better than men.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 2**

**Note:**

i. Use this space given below to answer the question.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit

1. What are the components of gender responsive policy?

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**15.5 National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001**

The National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001 (NPEW) was formulated as the blueprint for the future, with the express goal of addressing women’s felt needs and bringing about their advancement, development and empowerment. The NPEW laid down detailed prescriptions to, inter alia, address discrimination against women, strengthen existing
institutions which includes the legal system, and provide better access to healthcare and other services, equal opportunities for women’s participation in decision-making and mainstreaming gender concerns in the development process.

**The key functions of the National Mission are:**

- Economic empowerment of women;
- Convergence of women-centric Government Schemes;
- Ensure that violence against women is eliminated progressively;
- Ensure social empowerment of women with particular emphasis on health and education;
- Oversee gender mainstreaming of programmes, policies, institutional arrangements and processes of participating Ministries, institutions and organizations; and
- Undertake awareness generation as well as advocacy activity to fuel the demand for benefits under various schemes and programmes and create, if required, structures at district, tehsil and village level with the involvement of Panchayats for their fulfilment.

**Towards Empowerment of Women - Government of India initiatives of affirmative action**

- Setting up of the National Commission for women by an act of parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women;
- The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments of 1993 provide for reservation of seats for women in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities;
- India’s ratification of convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW) in 1993 to secure equal rights to women; and
- Upgradation of Department of Women and Child Development to a Ministry under the independent charge of Minister of state for Women and Child Development with effect from 30th January, 2006.

**15.6 STEPS TAKEN BY INDIAN GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO BRING HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT ON WOMEN**

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1993 mark historic events in the empowerment of Indian women as they ensure one-third of total seats for women in all elected offices of local bodies in rural areas and urban areas. It has been widely accepted that the goals of human development are closely intertwined with development and empowerment of women, who, as an independent group, constitute about 48.2% of the total population of India. Women constitute a valuable human resource and their socio-economic development is
imperative for sustainable growth of the economy. Our laws, development policies, plans and programmes are aimed at women’s advancement in different spheres. In the rural areas, above one million women are going to emerge as leaders/decision makers at the grassroots level and enter public life through the existing 0.25 million bodies. Of these, about 75,000 will be the chairpersons of local institutions at the village, block and district levels, as per the Act. The fact that women’s rights need to be safeguarded in every country of the world cannot be overemphasised.

In its capacity as the nodal Ministry, the Ministry of Women and Child Development seeks to promote the social and economic empowerment of women through policies and programmes cutting across sectors, mainstreaming gender concerns, creating awareness about their rights and facilitating institutional and legislative support for enabling them to develop to their full potential. Towards this end, the Ministry has been engaged in review of existing gender specific laws to remove gender bias, bringing new legislations aimed at gender justice and implementing Schemes / programmes.

The report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) released by the government mentioned the steps taken by it to contain the negative impact of restructuring of the economy that India has embarked upon. It enumerates the steps that have been taken to protect women. The Government of India made a special effort to increase its support to social sectors and started a number of schemes aimed at the poor, particularly poor women, and women in the informal sector. These include Rashtriya Mahila Kosh and Mahila Samakhya programmes.

The Integrated Child Development Programme (ICDS) run by the government is the largest in the world. Government figures show that ICDS has brought down infant mortality rate (IMR) from 55.1 in 1970 to 28.2 in 1992 and in case of female babies from 131 in 1978 to 80 in 1992. Life expectancy of women has risen sharply according to the report and stands at 58.1 years which is higher than that for men at 57.7 years. Statistically speaking, at the beginning of the century, women were not expected to survive beyond 23.96 years. They have, however, still to catch up on the literacy rate which now stands at 39.29 per cent for women as opposed to 64 per cent for men. Keeping in line with the government’s policy on equal opportunity, there are 65 women in senior positions in the Indian Foreign Service. It is commendable that despite various hurdles the government has managed to ensure equal career opportunities for women. The National Literacy Mission through the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) has played a key role in raising awareness on issues of gender equity. The
National Perspective Plan for Women (1988-2000) was drawn up as an important strategy to change social attitudes. The government has taken a number of steps and enacted a number of legislations to protect and safeguard women and ensure that their rights are not abused. One such measure is the Maternity Benefits Act, 1961. Before the enactment of this law, the grant of maternity leave and cash benefits were included in the Factories Act, 1948, Mines Act 1952 and Bidi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 amongst others. Under the Central Service (Leave) Rules 1972, “female government employees are at present entitled to maternity leave for a period of 135 days from the date of commencement. During such period the employee is paid leave salary equal to the pay drawn immediately before proceeding on leave”. But laws, unless enforced, tend to be ignored and abused.

15.6.1 Schemes for the development and promotion of women entrepreneurs
According to the Third All India Census of Small Scale Industries conducted in 2001-02 and subsequent estimates made, only 10.11% of the Micro and Small Enterprises in India are owned by women while 9.46% of the MSE enterprises are managed by women. Currently (2006-07) their estimated number is 12.99 lakh women managed enterprise and 12.15 lakh women managed enterprise.

In order to encourage more and more women enterprises in the MSE sector, several schemes have been formulated by this Ministry and some more are in the process of being finalized, targeted only at the development of women enterprises in India.

1. TRADE RELATED ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR WOMEN (TREAD)
With a view to encourage women in setting up their own ventures, government implements a Scheme, namely, “Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD) during the 11th Plan. The scheme envisages economic empowerment of women through the development of their entrepreneurial skills in nonfarm activities. There are three major components of the scheme:
(i) Government of India (GoI) grant upto 30% of the total project cost to the Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) for promoting entrepreneurship among women. The remaining 70% of the project cost is financed by the lending agency as loan for undertaking activities as envisaged in the project.
(ii) Government of India grant upto Rs.1 lakh per programme to training institutions / NGOs for imparting training to the women entrepreneurs, subject to these institutions/NGOs bring
their share to the extent of minimum 25% of GoI grant and 10% in case of NER. (iii) Need-based GoI grants up to Rs.5 lakh to National Entrepreneurship Development Institutions and any other institutions of repute for undertaking field surveys, research studies, evaluation studies, designing of training modules etc.

2. MICRO & SMALL ENTERPRISES CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (MSE-CDP)

a) Existing Clusters:

A cluster is defined as a group of enterprises, ideally having 100 members, producing same/similar products/services. While 100 members could be the minimum per cluster, depending on the density of population and other factors, even 200-300 could be a good target group for undertaking diagnostic study and the subsequent soft interventions in a cluster. However, in difficult and backward regions the target numbers could come down to 50 or less but it should not be too small as a lot of government expenditure is made per cluster. The Cluster Development Programme (CDP) being implemented envisages diagnostic study of identified clusters of traditional skill-based MSEs to identify appropriate technologies and their providers and to facilitate adoption of available technology meeting the specific needs of the end users. The Cluster Development aims at enhanced competitiveness, technology improvement, adoption of best manufacturing practices, marketing of products, employment generation etc. The scheme provides assistance for capacity building, common facilities, marketing etc. the delivery, assimilation and diffusion of the identified technology from its producers to the recipient user/cluster of small enterprises.

This scheme has been subsumed in the MSME-Cluster Development Programme. All the features of IID Scheme have been retained. To create physical infrastructure exclusively for women enterprises central grant of 40% of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs.2 crore is available. The Ministry of MSME is making efforts to enhance the quantum of grant to 80% in a project of Rs.10 crore.

3. CREDIT GUARANTEE FUND SCHEME FOR MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES

The Scheme was launched in August 2000 to ensure better flow of credit to micro and small enterprises by minimizing the risk perception of financial institutions and banks in lending without collateral security. Under the scheme, guarantee cover is provided to collateral free credit facility extended by member lending institutions (MLIs) to the new as well as existing micro and small enterprises on loans up to Rs.50 lakh. The guarantee cover available is up to
75% of the loans extended. The extent of guarantee cover is 80% for (i) micro enterprises for loans up to Rs.5 lakh; (ii) MSEs operated and/or owned by women; and (iii) all loans in the North-East Region. The lending institutions availing guarantee from the Trust have to pay one time guarantee fee of 1.5% and service charges of 0.75% per annum of the credit facility sanctioned. For loans up to Rs.5 lakh, the one time guarantee fee is 1% and service charges are 0.5% per annum of the credit facility sanctioned.

4. SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL AND MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT

MSME-DIs regularly organize a number of Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programme (ESDPs)/ Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDPs)/ Management Development Programmes (MDPs) to train the potential entrepreneurs in improving their techno-managerial knowledge and skill with a view to facilitating them to start MSEs in various fields. Many of the programmes are tailor made for the target group for SC, ST, OBC Women, Minorities and other weaker sections and exclusively for women also. These programmes are also called “Out-reach Programmes” as they are conducted in rural / less developed areas.

The Government of India devised special programs to increases employment and income-generating activities for women in rural areas.

(i) Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana and Swaran Jayanti Sekhari Rozgar Yojana were introduced by government to provide reservations for women and encouraging them to start their ventures.

(ii) ‘Women in agriculture’ scheme was introduced to train women farmers having small and marginal holdings in agriculture and allied activities.

(iii) To generate more employment opportunities for women KVIC took special measures in remote areas.

(iv) Women co-operatives schemes were formed to help women in agro-based industries like dairy farming, poultry, animal husbandry, horticulture etc. with full financial support from the Government.

(v) Several other schemes like integrated Rural Development Programs (IRDP), Training of Rural youth for Self-employment (TRYSEM) etc. were started to alleviated poverty. 30-40% reservation is provided to women under these schemes.

(vi) New schemes named Women Development Corporations were introduced by government to help women entrepreneurs in arranging credit and marketing facilities.
State Industrial and Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has introduced following schemes to assist the women entrepreneurs. These schemes are:

(i) Mahila Udyam Nidhi
(ii) Micro Cordite Scheme for Women
(iii) Mahila Vikas Nidhi
(iv) Women Entrepreneurial Development Programmes
(v) Marketing Development Fund for Women

Consortium of Women entrepreneurs of India provides a platform to assist the women entrepreneurs to develop new, creative and innovative techniques of production, finance and marketing.

There are different bodies such as NGOs, voluntary organizations, Self-help groups, institutions and individual enterprises from rural and urban areas which collectively help the women entrepreneurs in their activities.

**Training programmes to support economic development:**

The following training schemes especially for the self-employment of women are introduced by government:

(i) Support for Training and Employment Programme of Women (STEP).
(ii) Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA).
(iii) Small Industry Service Institutes (SISIs)
(iv) State Financial Corporations
(v) National Small Industries Corporations
(vi) District Industrial Centres (DICs)

**Mahila Vikas Nidhi**

SIDBI has developed this fund for the entrepreneurial development of women especially in rural areas. Under Mahila Vikas Nidhi grants loan to women are given to start their venture in the field like spinning, weaving, knitting, embroidery products, block printing, handlooms handicrafts, bamboo products etc.

**Rashtriya Mahila Kosh**

In 1993, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh was set up to grant micro credit to poor women at reasonable rates of interest with very low transaction costs and simple procedures.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 3**

**Note:** i. Use this space given below to answer the question.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit
1. Discuss the main features of National Policy for Empowerment of Women.

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15.7 GENDER BUDGETING

Gender Budgeting is one of the affirmative action. Planning Commission, Government of India, has stated that, "the concepts of Women Component Plan and Gender Budgeting are not complementary but often contradictory and the world over countries have moved to using Gender Responsive Budgeting as a tool for gender mainstreaming and ensuring gender equity" and has clarified that, "Women Component Plan should no longer be used as a strategy either at the Centre or at the State level. In its place as already initiated by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Women and Child Development, we should adopt Gender Responsive Budgeting or Gender Budgeting only".

Gender responsive budgeting or gender budgeting is a methodology to assist Government to integrate a gender perspective into the budget as a key plan for public expenditure. The national budget impacts women’s life in several ways. It can, for example directly promote women’s development when funds are allocated for programmes that address women’s economic, social and other needs. This can be done both through funding of mainstream programs that are delivered in a way that is sensitive to women’s situation and through funding of women targeted schemes. The can also reduce the opportunities for empowerment of women if there are budgetary cuts. Gender budgeting is refers to the process of conceiving, planning, approving, executing, monitoring, analysing and auditing budgets in a gender sensitive way. It involves analysis of the impact of actual expenditure and revenue (usually of Govt) on women and girls compared to men and boys. It helps government to decide how policies need to be made, adjusted and reprioritised. It is a tool for effective policy implementation where one can check whether the allocation are in line with policy commitments and are having the desired impact.

The ministry of finance as an agency with primary responsibility for the budget has also recognised the potential of gender budgeting. The ministry of finance mandated all the ministries to establish gender budgeting cells by January 2005 and asked 18 ministries and departments to submit a report highlighting budgetary allocations for women. The first Gender Budget Statement (GBS) appeared in the union budget 2005-2006 and included 10 demands for grants. In 2006-2007 the GBS covered 24 demands for grant. At the time of
writing, gender budget cells have been established in more than 50 departments and capacity building of the cells has taken place.

15.8 WOMEN AND ECONOMY

As per the ‘National Policy for the Empowerment of Women’, women’s perspectives will be included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes. Their contribution to socio-economic development as producers and workers will be recognized in the formal and informal sectors (including home based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment and to her working conditions will be drawn up. Such measures could include:

- Reinterpretation and redefinition of conventional concepts of work wherever necessary e.g. in the Census records, to reflect women’s contribution as producers and workers.
- Preparation of satellite and national accounts.
- Development of appropriate methodologies to empower women.

Micro Credit

In order to enhance women’s access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of new and strengthening of existing micro-credit mechanisms and micro-finance institutions will be undertaken so that the outreach of credit is enhanced. Other supportive measures would be taken to ensure adequate flow of credit through extant financial institutions and banks, so that all women below poverty line have easy access to credit.

15.9 ECONOMIC SUPPORT FROM BANKS THROUGH RBI

From the Rural Planning and Credit department of RBI, a decision was taken on Strengthening of credit delivery to women particularly in Tiny and SSI sector, as per those records, RBI’s commitment on Women development is seen as follows.

The strategy for increasing women’s access to the formal financial sector should be a long term goal with flexibility to adapt to local needs and situations. This will help build up an effective and efficient financial intervention. Besides, attitudinal change of society and removal of unequal inheritance laws and practices could enable women to exercise property” rights and have a better standing in the society. The following action points are required to be
taken up by banks in order to reach potential women entrepreneurs and encourage them to avail credit and credit plus services from banks:

(1) **Redefining of Banks' policies / Long term plans**

Banks should redefine its policies by taking into account women's requirements in a focused and integrated manner. Banks should have a Charter for women which must be published. They should prepare long term plans and within that area plans with a view to outreach credit to women. To start with, banks should earmark at least 2 per cent of their net bank credit for women and raise it to 5 per cent in 5 years time. For this purpose, they may take into account credit extended to women directly for smaller projects; credit under different schemes of banks/Government sponsored schemes and credit to companies where majority of the promoters shares are held by women; partnership firms where majority partners are women and proprietary concerns where proprietors are women. Banks must ensure that the benefits under various poverty alleviation and employment promotion schemes go to the women in the prescribed ratio.

(2) **Setting up women cells**

(i) Women's cells should be set up at the banks' head office as well as in their regional offices where information, counseling/guidance and other credit related services for women entrepreneurs are readily available. The cell at the head office should function under the Executive Director of the Bank. The cell should preferably be handled by women officers/staff and act as data collecting center for information about women entrepreneurs and for monitoring the status of applications received and extent of credit disbursed. The cell should also disseminate information to women entrepreneurs about various credit related schemes and facilities available with the bank particularly for self employment.

(ii) At the branch level, or clusters of branches in rural areas, the bank should have a desk visibly placed in order to provide women with relevant information and guide/assist them in making loan applications etc. As far as possible the desk should be handled by a well trained lady staff member particularly in rural areas.

(iii) Special attention should be given to women in every branch. One officer in each branch should be designated exclusively for dealing with cases of flow of credit to women. Banks should have a target for covering at least 20 women per branch for lending and 20 for training.

(3) **Simplification of procedural formalities**

The application forms, appraisal standards and other procedural requirements for extending finance to women entrepreneurs should be simplified as far as possible. Banks should ensure
that the managerial staff assists women entrepreneurs in understanding the banks’ procedural formalities in a simple manner. They should also give assistance in the preparation of project reports and completion of other paper work.

(4) **Orientation of Bank officers/staff on gender concerns/credit requirements of women**

(i) Banks should take appropriate measures to ensure that the branch level functionaries do not have traditional bias of preferring men to women in financing. For this purpose the bank staff should be oriented through short term training programmes in which a special component on gender concerns can be incorporated.

(ii) Banks should also organize workshops of two-three days duration for its branch managers/staff on different aspects of handling credit requirements of women. Banks should also invite members of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) or women social workers to these workshops for active interaction so that the problems are faced by the women entrepreneurs could be better understood by bank staff in an informal manner.

(5) **Publicity campaign for creating awareness about credit facilities**

(i) Banks should launch Awareness Programmes/Publicity Campaigns about schemes available for women. Attractive publicity material such as posters, charts, can be specially designed in a simple manner so that women are able to understand it easily. The publicity material should be available in different languages and should be widely distributed particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. Gender concerns should also be addressed through publicity material viz. slogans on hoardings/bus shelters etc.

(ii) For the large numbers of illiterate and semi-literate women, particularly in the rural and semi-urban areas, the banks should make efforts to inform them through audio-visual methods/slides and charts about the different schemes under which finance is available. Banks should establish contact with the Village panchayats to seek their assistance in dissemination/distribution of information material to women in the village and for delivery of credit to identified women.

(iii) Banks can also explore the possibility of using the local radio and the television network for disseminating information to women in the farthest corners of the country.

(iv) Banks should interact with schools/colleges/universities for publicizing schemes and programmes for women.

(v) In the present computer age, banks should make use of creating web-sites through which wider publicity could be given about various schemes/credit facilities available with the bank for women entrepreneurs. This would help all sections of the society to have easy access to such information particularly the young, educated urban women who are using computers.
(6) Entrepreneurship Development Programmes/Training facilities for Women

(i) Banks should organize entrepreneurship development programmes exclusively for women entrepreneurs. For this purpose the banks can contact various Entrepreneurship Development Institutes in the country and develop appropriate programmes for women in the urban and rural areas.

(ii) Banks should finance training courses for women, particularly in the area of information technology.

(iii) There is a need for more training institutes particularly in the rural areas to cater to the training requirements/skill upgradation of rural women

(iv) During school/college vacations banks should involve teachers/students in training programmes for women

(v) Government organizations should give preference to purchase of goods made by women entrepreneurs

(7) Specialised branches for women

(i) Banks should make concerted efforts to open specialized branches in identified areas for financing women entrepreneurs on the lines of 881 branches or Agricultural Finance branches. The specialized branches should cater exclusively and at least predominantly to the requirements of women entrepreneurs in an integrated manner. Apart from the other banking functions, these branches could act as a Centre for women which offers inter alia, facilities like a small library, credit related counselling and guidance services and information about various schemes. The branch should be fully computerized and may also collect information about schemes/programmes available for women in other banks and organizations so that women coming to one branch can have access to information about schemes in other banks as well.

(ii) Over the next one year, at least one specialized branch for women would “be opened in every district of the country. RBI will proportionally allocate the numbers of such branches to be opened by each bank.

(8) Motivational strategies to enthuse bank officials/staff

Banks should use motivational strategies to enthuse their managers/staff to achieve targets for women. Their work in this area should be given appropriate recognition. Banks can give annual awards to the 3 best performing branches in achieving targets plus providing credit related services to women.

(9) Monitoring system

A monitoring system should be in place for submitting regular reports on the credit flow to women. It should be an item on the calendar for Review being submitted to the Board of Directors of the bank. RBI should also monitor and give suitable directions to banks from time to time.
(10) **Data collection**
Separate data about credit flow to women is not presently available. Data should be generated by banks and quarterly reports submitted to RBI who should process the information and create a separate data base for women. Data for women should be collected separately for amounts advanced through micro-credit, credit to small scale industries and credit to medium/large industries. RBI should also assess the extent of financial assistance given to women in the last 2-3 years, latest by September, 2000.

(11) **Strengthening of existing schemes**
(i) There should be greater interaction between NABARD/SIDBI and banks. Existing schemes and programmes being implemented by them should be further strengthened both in terms of coverage as well as volume of credit. Other facilities offered under these schemes eg. Training/orientation should also get more attention.
(ii) There is no direct alliance between SIDBI and banks. SIDBI should explore the possibility of having a tie-up with banks for women's schemes.

(12) **Increasing the limit for non-obtention of collateral security**
(i) Banks insistence on collateral/securities is a major impediment in borrowing by women. Banks should therefore implement the recent measures taken by Government / RBI for increasing the limit for not asking collateral security from Rs.1 lakh to Rs.5 lakh. Banks may also consider whether loans beyond Rs.5 lakhs i.e. at least upto Rs.10 lakhs could be offered without collateral.
(ii) Banks should encourage women entrepreneurs to avail loans on liberal terms like minimum margin money. The promoters' contribution could be lowered from 25 per cent to 10-15 per cent.

**Involving NGOs/SHGs/Women's Cooperatives**
(i) Non-government organizations (NGOs) are playing a crucial role in reaching out to women even in the remotest regions. A large number of well known NGOs are operating throughout the country. In many areas smaller NGOs are also working at the grass roots level. Banks can establish contacts with the local NGOs and liaise with them to identify the needs of women and give credit related information and guidance services.
(ii) Financial institutions viz. NABARD and SIDBI are already involving the Women's self help groups for reaching out to women entrepreneurs. Banks can also, take initiative in working out viable strategies to work with more Self Help Groups (SHGs) and women's cooperatives and fix a yearly target for lending to SHGs.
14) Mahila Rural Co-operative Banks: Mahila Rural Cooperative Banks on the lines of Mahila Urban Cooperative banks should be set up for assisting women in the semi-urban and rural areas. RBI may issue licenses for such banks liberally.

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

Note: i. Use this space given below to answer the question.

    ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit

1. What is gender budgeting.

   ____________________________________________________________________________

15.10 SUMMING UP

This Unit covers the need for affirmative action. This is traced with the help of defining status and position. Not only discusses the need for affirmative action, the Unit listed the measures taken by the government of India in this regard. Since the entire course is on financial inclusion, this Unit specifically analyse the need for taking affirmative action to make women financially inclusive.

15.11 GLOSSARY

National Crime Records Bureau: As per the recommendation of National Police Commission, the Government of India created national crime records bureau at the centre. Bureau will be under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

15.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1. The 1974 Government of India Status of Women in India Report defines status as the relative position of persons in a social system or sub-system which is distinguishable from that of others through its rights and obligations. Each status position is expressed in terms of a role. Since each individual occupies a number of distinct status within a society, he/she performs a variety of roles. It is imperative to make a distinction between the ideal role behaviour/expected role behaviour and actual role behaviour. The divergence between these leads to a change in the role perception of individuals. Status is realized through roles. This brings into focus the rights and opportunities
provided to women by the states and socio-cultural institutions to perform these roles, which may not necessarily reinforce each other.

2. To bring the gender equality and equity in all areas and sectors and making women and men to have equal access and control over resources, there is a need for affirmative action.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2
1. Public Finance policy, Social Protection and Trade Policy

Check your Progress Exercise 3
1. The key functions of the National Mission are:
   - Economic empowerment of women;
   - Convergence of women centric Government Schemes;
   - Ensure that violence against women is eliminated progressively;
   - Ensure social empowerment of women with particular emphasis on health and education;
   - Oversee gender mainstreaming of programmes, policies, institutional arrangements and processes of participating Ministries, institutions and organizations; and
   - Undertake awareness generation as well as advocacy activity to fuel the demand for benefits under various schemes and programmes and create, if required, structures at district, tehsil and village level with the involvement of Panchayats for their fulfilment.

Check Your Progress Exercise 4
1. Gender responsive budgeting or gender budgeting is a methodology to assist Government to integrate a gender perspective into the budget as a key plan for public expenditure. The national budget impacts women’s life in several ways. It can, for example directly promote women’s development when funds are allocated for programmes that address women’s economic, social and other needs. This can be done both through funding of mainstream programs that are delivered in a way that is sensitive to women’s situation and through funding of women targeted schemes. The can also reduce the opportunities for empowerment of women if there are budgetary cuts. Gender budgeting is refers to the process of conceiving, planning, approving, executing, monitoring, analysing and auditing budgets in a gender sensitive way. It involves analysis of the impact of actual expenditure and revenue (usually of Govt) on women and girls compared to men and boys. It helps government to decide how
policies need to be made, adjusted and reprioritised. It is a tool for effective policy implementation where one can check whether the allocation are in line with policy commitments and are having the desired impact.

15.13 REFERENCES

5. NCRB ‘Crime in India, 2002’
8. OECD (2009), Promoting Pro-Poor Growth – social protection, OECD, Paris.
20. Gender and women’s health, publication by CHETNA, NGO
22. Gender and women’s health, publication by CHETNA, NGO

15.14 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

1. Discuss the schemes and programmes of government of India related to women and entrepreneurship. How these programme beneficial to make women financially inclusive?

2. What are the steps taken by RBI for development of Women?