**Promoting rural entrepreneurship through secondary agriculture in Bihar**

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 **ABSTRACT**

Underemployment and/or unemployment is the major problem of India in general and Bihar in particular. The holdings are highly fragmented, the state is one of the poorest in India. The average monthly farm household income in Bihar is lower than the National Average of Rs 10200 as per the National Sample Survey Organization. Although the state is rich in natural resources, frequent floods every year lead to severe sustainability issues. The industrial presence in low and agricultural dependency of the population is very high. It becomes difficult for these households to reap economies of scale from agriculture, hence alternative sources of income and employment are highly required. During the pandemic, the stories of reverse migration were horrible and that shows how sorry the state of affairs is in the state. The reverse migration made the policy makers/think tanks/academia/industry to pause and understand these phenomena, and help the state work on improving the employment and income opportunities. This can be controlled only by rural entrepreneurship development through efficient utilizing of the local resources. Secondary agriculture as classified and recommended by the committee on Doubling Farmers’ Income, seems to be an effective solution to this issue. Secondary Agriculture includes the activities which can utilize locally available resources and man-power. It is classified into Type A activities which is related to the value addition on and off farm, into type B activities which is focused on alternative enterprises, and type C activities which is related to utilization of crop residues. Some of the secondary agriculture enterprises, are vermicompost units, nursery raising, agro-tourism, sericulture, waste to wealth units etc. For example, It is estimated that the crude value of Crop residue (from Wheat, Paddy, Fruits and Vegetables, three major commodities in Bihar) at market prices is roughly around Rs 161 billion. This completely goes waste, preventing wastages and losses through value addition will not only increase farm incomes and employment opportunities in Rural Bihar, it will also help develop self-sustain villages with s stable circular Bip-economy. The Government of India has several schemes to support entrepreneurship linked to secondary agriculture like Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Skill India, Start-up India.