

Kerala's Kudumbashree Programme

Why in news?

Kerala's Kudumbashree programme is at a crossroads after 25 years since its inception.

What is the programme about?

- Kudumbashree is the poverty eradication and women empowerment programme launched in 1998.
- It is implemented by the State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM) of the Government of Kerala.
- It was renamed Kudumbashree Mission in 1999 and began to function under the local self-government department.
- The name Kudumbashree in Malayalam language means 'prosperity of the family'.

What is the organisational structure of Kudumbashree?

- The community structure of Kudumbashree evolved from the experiments conducted in Alappuzha Municipality and Malappuram in early 1990s.
- Kudumbashree has a three-tier structure for its women community network.



What are the functions of Kudumbashree?

- The Mission converges the community network with local self-government institutions.
- It provides financial and technical assistance to economic and social empowerment programmes.
- It monitors the overall implementation of the poverty eradication and women empowerment programme across the State. For example - DDU-GKY.
- It also works as the platform for partnerships with government departments at the district and State levels.
- **Lending** - Thrift and credit programme is the first level entry point for Kudumbashree.
- NHGs start lending to members using the group's savings.
- The qualified NHGs are eligible for bank linkage and loans are availed thereafter.

What are the impacts of the programme?

- Kudumbashree became a multifaceted entity with footprints in all spheres of society apart from being a credit programme.
- Community restaurants, branded products in stores and on e-commerce platforms,

- micro and small scale industries, e-service centres, all-women construction sites
- Few notable impacts of Kudumbashree -
 - Haritha Karma Sena volunteers who collect non-biodegradable waste from households for disposal.
 - Snehitha gender helpdesk and gender resource centres.
 - The workforce for the animal birth control programme for regulating the population of community dogs.
 - **DDU-GKY** - Kudumbashree is the implementing agency for the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY).
 - Under DDU-GKY, it gave vocational training to some 62,000 people and placement for over 44,000.
 - **LSG** - Kudumbashree pushed the representation for women in local bodies.
 - Women constitute 54% of Kerala's 21,900 local body members and about 70% of these women are from Kudumbashree.

What are the new challenges faced by the programme?

- After 25 years, Kudumbashree has to address the aspirations of the new generation in a tech-driven world.
- Majority of the micro enterprises facilitated by Kudumbashree stick to the gendered vocations of women.
- Only 0.64% of the population in Kerala is categorised under extreme poverty, hence it is now focusing on skilling educated members of the auxiliary groups.
- This skilling enables the educated members to take up employment or start enterprises.
- While over 26,000 enterprises under the Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme have been launched, just few are noteworthy.

What is the Way forward?

- To improve productivity of women, they should have more time for themselves.
- Ward-level day care centres and day homes for the elderly has to be set up to give women adequate productive time.

References

1. [The Hindu - Kerala's Kudumbashree programme is at a crossroads](#)
2. [Kudumbashree - Overview](#)
3. [The Kudumbashree Story](#)