

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE
WOMAN FARMER
2026

1 NO POVERTY | 2 ZERO HUNGER | 5 GENDER EQUALITY | 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES | 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE WOMEN FARMER 2026

INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAMME ON

Advancing Women Farmers' Entrepreneurship through Agro-Processing, Value Addition and Market Linkages for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods

15–18 DECEMBER 2026

AFRICAN-ASIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION, NEW DELHI

Theme of Online Programme:

Advancing Women Farmers' Entrepreneurship through Agro-Processing, Value Addition and Market Linkages for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods

Organizer / Training Institute:

African Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO)

Duration:

15-18 DECEMBER 2026

Session Timings:

14.00 to 16.00 hrs (IST) daily.

Mode :
Online Mode

Deadlines for Application:

10 DECEMBER 2026

INDRODUCTION

Designated by the UN as the International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF 2026), this initiative highlights the vital role of women, who comprise 66% of the workforce in sub-Saharan Africa and 71% in Southern Asia within agrifood systems. Despite this immense contribution, women face a 24% productivity gap, a wage gap where they earn 82 cents to a man's dollar, and limited access to resources. Closing these gaps could increase global GDP by nearly US$1 trillion and reduce food insecurity for 45 million people, underscoring the urgent need to empower women across agricultural value chains.

To address these challenges, agro-processing, value addition, and enhanced market linkages offer powerful pathways for transforming raw produce into higher-value products, reducing post-harvest losses, and fostering women-led rural enterprises. In alignment with the observance of IYWF 2026, this capacity-building initiative focuses on strengthening the entrepreneurial, technical, and institutional capacities of professionals and stakeholders working with women farmers across AARDO Member Countries. By promoting practical, affordable, and locally adaptable approaches to agro-processing, financial literacy, and enterprise management, the programme aims to drive inclusive rural transformation, livelihood diversification, and the economic empowerment of women farmers as key agricultural entrepreneurs.

OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the training programme are to:

- Enhance the entrepreneurial and technical capacities of stakeholders working with women farmers in agro-processing and value addition.
- Promote appropriate, affordable and sustainable technologies for processing, preservation, packaging and storage of agricultural produce.
- Strengthen knowledge of product development, quality assurance, food safety, branding and business management.
- Improve understanding of agricultural value chains, market intelligence, digital marketing and market-linkage mechanisms.
- Promote women-led micro, small and medium enterprises, self-help groups, cooperatives and farmer producer organizations.
- Enhance awareness of financing opportunities, institutional support, credit facilities and enterprise development services.
- Facilitate the sharing of successful experiences and good practices from AARDO Member Countries.
- Contribute to the objectives of the International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026 by promoting women's economic empowerment and sustainable rural livelihoods.

TENTATIVE TRAINING SESSIONS

Day	Proposed Theme
Day 1	Women Farmers' Entrepreneurship: Opportunities and Challenges in Rural Development
Day 2	Agro-Processing, Post-Harvest Management and Affordable Technologies
Day 3	Value Addition, Product Development, Quality Assurance and Enterprise Management
Day 4	Market Linkages, Digital Marketing, Financing and Successful Models of Women-Led Enterprises

The detailed session schedule, including topics and resource persons, will be circulated separately.

BROAD COURSE COMPONENTS

Women's Entrepreneurship in Agriculture and Rural Development

- Role of women farmers in agricultural production, food security and rural economic development.
- Identification of entrepreneurial opportunities in agriculture and allied sectors.
- Women-led rural enterprises and community-based business models.
- Challenges and opportunities for women's participation in agricultural value chains.

Agro-Processing and Post-Harvest Management

- Technologies for processing and preservation of agricultural produce.
- Reduction of post-harvest losses through improved handling, storage and processing.
- Affordable and locally adaptable processing equipment and technologies.
- Appropriate processing solutions for smallholder farmers and rural enterprises.

Value Addition and Product Development

- Value addition in cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables and other locally available agricultural products.
- Product diversification and development of market-oriented products.
- Packaging, labelling, food safety and quality standards.
- Product innovation and the utilization of local agricultural resources.

Enterprise Management

- Identification of viable business opportunities and preparation of enterprise plans.
- Costing, pricing, financial literacy and basic business management.
- Access to credit, grants, institutional finance and entrepreneurship support services.
- Risk management and strategies for enterprise sustainability and growth.

Market Linkages and Digital Marketing

- Connecting women farmers with consumers, retailers, processors and institutional buyers.
- Collective marketing through cooperatives, self-help groups and farmer producer organizations.

- Digital platforms, e-commerce and social media for market access.
- Branding, market intelligence and strategies to improve product competitiveness.

Sustainable and Inclusive Rural Livelihoods

- Environmentally sustainable processing and resource-efficient production.
- Waste reduction, by-product utilization and circular economy approaches.
- Strengthening women's participation in agricultural value chains and rural institutions.
- Promoting resilient, inclusive and sustainable women-led enterprises.

Experiences and Good Practices from AARDO Member Countries

- Country experiences in promoting women farmers' entrepreneurship.
- Successful models of community-based agro-processing and collective marketing.
- Practical approaches to technology transfer, enterprise development and market access.
- Lessons for replication and adaptation in African and Asian rural contexts.

PARTICIPATION

The programme is intended for government officials, agricultural extension professionals, researchers, academicians, rural development practitioners and other stakeholders from AARDO Member Countries

Officials dealing with agriculture, food processing, rural development, women's empowerment and entrepreneurship.

- Professionals working with women farmers, self-help groups, cooperatives and farmer producer organizations.
- Representatives of agricultural extension services, research institutions and rural livelihood programmes.
- Practitioners involved in micro-enterprise development, food processing and value-chain promotion.
- Development professionals supporting market access, digital marketing and financial inclusion for rural women.

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION:

- Hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification in agriculture, agricultural economics, food technology, rural development, business management, women's development or a related discipline.
- Have relevant professional experience in agricultural extension, rural development, women's empowerment, agro-processing, entrepreneurship promotion or market development.
- Be employed by a government department, agricultural institution, research organization, cooperative, farmer producer organization, non-governmental organization or rural development agency.
- Demonstrate an interest in promoting women farmers' entrepreneurship and sustainable rural livelihoods.
- Be willing and able to participate actively in all online sessions.

Preference may be given to officials and professionals directly involved in designing, implementing or supporting programmes for women farmers and rural entrepreneurs.

MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

The medium of communication will be English. Participants should have a good working knowledge of English to understand presentations, participate in discussions and interact with resource persons.

WHATSAPP COMMUNICATION

The meeting link and other relevant instructions will be communicated to selected participants before the commencement of the programme. Participants will be expected to ensure reliable internet connectivity, access to a computer or suitable digital device, and active participation throughout the training. AARDO may establish a dedicated communication group for sharing programme-related information, learning materials and updates.

CERTIFICATION

An electronic certificate of participation will be issued by AARDO to participants who successfully complete the programme and fulfil the prescribed attendance and participation requirements.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Improve participants' understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with women farmers' entrepreneurship.
- Enhance knowledge of agro-processing, value addition, post-harvest management and appropriate technologies.
- Strengthen capacity in business planning, product development, quality management and market-oriented enterprise development.
- Promote stronger linkages between women farmers, producer organizations, processors, financial institutions and markets.
- Facilitate the exchange of good practices and practical approaches among AARDO Member Countries.
- Encourage the development and replication of women-led rural enterprises that contribute to employment generation, income diversification and sustainable livelihoods.
- Reinforce awareness of the importance of empowering women farmers in the context of the International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026.

HOW TO APPLY

Step 1: Log on to the link: **http://aardo.org/formDD.php**
Step 2: Fill up the details and submit. Take print out of the filled in application form.
Step 3: Applicants are required to sign their applications and send them along with the recommendation letter of the Nodal Ministry of AARDO/Centre of Excellence to our email: ppp@aardo.org

SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants will be selected by AARDO based on their eligibility, professional background, relevance of their work to the programme theme and potential to apply the knowledge gained in their respective countries. Selected participants will be informed through the designated communication channels. The decision of AARDO regarding selection will be final.

About AARDO

The **AFRICAN- ASIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (AARDO)** is a rural centric inter-governmental autonomous organization located at 2, State Guest Houses Complex, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110 021, India.

African Asian Rural Development Organization is mandated to develop understanding among members for better appreciation of each other's problems and to collectively explore, opportunities for coordination of efforts for the welfare and eradication of thirst, hunger, illiteracy, disease and poverty amongst rural people in the African-Asian region. The Organization comprises thirty six (36) members, which include thirty one (32) countries namely, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia and Zambia from Africa, and Bangladesh, R.O. China (Taiwan), India, Iraq, Jordan, R.O. Korea, Lebanon, Malaysia, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Syria and Yemen from Asia, as the full members, and Korea Rural Community Corporation (KRC), R.O. Korea, the Agricultural Bank of Sudan (ABS), Sudan, Ekiti Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines & Agriculture (EKICCIMA), Nigeria and Economic and Social Development Center (ESDC), Palestine as Associate Members.

AARDO is promoting South-South Triangular cooperation in the domain of agricultural and rural development. As such, AARDO is championing and advocating more science to rural societies for inclusive transformation of rural areas in Africa and Asia.

PROGRAM COORDINATORS

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