

CASE STUDIES

Women and Agriculture: Shaping the Future Together



**Indian Council of Agricultural Research
New Delhi**

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Shaping the Future Together**



भारतीय
ICAR

**Division of Agricultural Extension
Indian Council of Agricultural Research
New Delhi**

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Disclaimer

The case studies presented in this publication are based on information collected from women farmers and entrepreneurs through field interactions, institutional records, and secondary sources. While due care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information, the authors/editors and publishers do not guarantee the completeness or absolute correctness of the data presented. The experiences, practices, and enterprises described in these stories reflect the individual initiatives and achievements of the concerned farmers/entrepreneurs and are intended primarily for documentation and inspiration. The inclusion of any practice, technology, or enterprise should not be construed as an endorsement or recommendation by the publishing organization. The publishers shall not be responsible for any consequences arising from the use or application of the information contained in this publication.

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MESSAGE

Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare,
Government of India

IT gives me immense pleasure to know that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is bringing out a compendium titled “*Case Studies – Women and Agriculture: Shaping the Future Together*” in the context of the Global Conference on Women in Agri-Food Systems (GCWAS-2026) and the International Year of Women Farmers (2026) declared by the United Nations.

Women have always been the backbone of Indian agriculture. From crop production to livestock management, post-harvest handling, value addition and marketing, their contribution sustains not only farm productivity but also household nutrition, rural livelihoods and community resilience. Today, as India advances towards a self-reliant, climate-resilient and market-oriented agricultural system, the role of women farmers and agri-entrepreneurs has become even more critical.

This publication, documenting inspiring success stories of women innovators, is a powerful testament to the strength, creativity and leadership of India’s rural women. These stories highlight how women are transforming challenges into opportunities adopting improved technologies, promoting sustainable practices, building agri-enterprises, strengthening farmer collectives, and contributing to food and nutritional security. Their journeys reaffirm that when women are empowered with knowledge, resources, and institutional support, they become agents of transformation in agriculture and rural development.

The Government of India is committed to ensuring gender-inclusive agricultural growth through various schemes promoting skill development, entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, digital access, and market linkages for women farmers. Institutions like ICAR, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), and women-centric programmes are playing a vital role in strengthening the capacities of women farmers across the country.

I am confident that this compendium will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, extension professionals and development agencies, while also inspiring countless women to step forward with confidence and innovation.

I congratulate ICAR and all partner institutions for this significant initiative and extend my heartfelt appreciation to all the women innovators whose remarkable journeys are featured in this publication.


(Shivraj Singh Chouhan)





MESSAGE

Bhagirath Chaudhary
Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare
Government of India

I am delighted to learn that ICAR is publishing the compendium "*CASE STUDIES- Women and Agriculture: Shaping the Future Together*" in this year, which has been declared by the United Nations as "International Year of Woman Farmer" (2026).

Women farmers are central to India's agri-food systems. Their contributions span crop cultivation, horticulture, livestock, fisheries, agro-processing and value addition, often under challenging socio-economic conditions; although their immense contributions have historically remained under-recognized. This publication rightly brings their achievements to the forefront and celebrates their role as producers, innovators, entrepreneurs and community leaders.

The success stories presented in this compendium demonstrate how women are successfully adopting improved technologies, climate-resilient practices, diversified farming systems, and agri-business models. Their efforts not only enhance farm productivity and income but also strengthen nutrition security and generate rural employment.

The Government of India is continuously working to improve women's access to training, credit, inputs, technology and markets, and to strengthen women-led self-help groups, cooperatives and farmer producer organizations. Such initiatives are instrumental in enabling women to move from subsistence farming to profitable agribusiness ventures.

I am confident that the experiences documented in this compendium will motivate and guide many more rural women to adopt innovative agricultural practices and entrepreneurial approaches.

(Bhagirath Chaudhary)





संदेश

राम नाथ ठाकुर

राज्य मंत्री, कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्रालय

भारत सरकार

अत्यंत हर्ष का विषय है कि भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद (आईसीएआर) द्वारा “केस स्टडीज: वूमेन एंड एग्रीकल्चर - शेपिंग द फ्यूचर टुगेदर” विषय पर यह प्रकाशन अंतरराष्ट्रीय महिला किसान वर्ष-2026 के अवसर पर प्रकाशित किया जा रहा है। यह पहल कृषि क्षेत्र में महिलाओं के महत्वपूर्ण योगदान, उनके नेतृत्व और नवाचार को राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर सम्मान एवं पहचान प्रदान करने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रयास है।।

भारत की कृषि कार्यबल में महिलाओं की भागीदारी अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण और उल्लेखनीय है। वे खाद्य सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने, पोषण सुदृढ़ता को बढ़ावा देने, प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के संरक्षण तथा सतत ग्रामीण आजीविका के सृजन में केंद्रीय भूमिका निभाती हैं। इस प्रकाशन में संकलित सफलता की कहानियाँ स्पष्ट रूप से दर्शाती हैं कि महिलाएँ केवल कृषि श्रम-शक्ति का हिस्सा नहीं हैं, बल्कि नवाचार, उद्यमिता, सामुदायिक नेतृत्व और सतत विकास की सशक्त प्रेरक शक्ति भी हैं।

इन प्रेरक अनुभवों से यह भी स्पष्ट होता है कि महिला कृषकों ने सीमित संसाधनों, सामाजिक प्रतिबंधों तथा जलवायु परिवर्तन जैसी चुनौतियों का सामना दृढ़ संकल्प, सामूहिक सहयोग और निरंतर सीखने की प्रवृत्ति के माध्यम से सफलतापूर्वक किया है। जैविक खेती, एकीकृत कृषि प्रणाली, मूल्य संवर्धन, प्रसंस्करण तथा प्रत्यक्ष विपणन जैसे क्षेत्रों में उनके प्रयास न केवल उल्लेखनीय हैं, बल्कि ऐसे अनुकरणीय मॉडल भी प्रस्तुत करते हैं जिन्हें देश के विभिन्न कृषि-परिदृश्यों में अपनाया और विस्तार दिया जा सकता है।

महिला किसानों का सशक्तिकरण समावेशी और संतुलित विकास की आधारशिला है। इससे न केवल किसानों की आय में वृद्धि संभव है, बल्कि जलवायु-अनुकूल और लचीली कृषि-खाद्य प्रणालियों के निर्माण को भी प्रोत्साहन मिलता है। इस दिशा में आईसीएआर तथा उसके संस्थानों द्वारा विकसित लैंगिक-संवेदनशील प्रौद्योगिकियाँ, कौशल विकास कार्यक्रम और सुदृढ़ कृषि विस्तार सेवाएँ महिलाओं की क्षमता को सशक्त बनाने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रही हैं और परिवर्तनकारी प्रभाव उत्पन्न कर रही हैं।

मुझे पूर्ण विश्वास है कि यह प्रकाशन उत्कृष्ट महिला नवप्रवर्तकों की उपलब्धियों को राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर पहचान दिलाने के साथ-साथ नीति-निर्माताओं, वैज्ञानिकों तथा कृषि विस्तार तंत्र से जुड़े सभी संस्थानों को महिलाओं के लिए अधिक सक्षम, सहयोगात्मक और संवेदनशील व्यवस्थाएँ विकसित करने के लिए प्रेरित करेगा।

मैं इस संकलन में सम्मिलित सभी महिला नवप्रवर्तकों को हार्दिक बधाई और शुभकामनाएँ देता हूँ तथा इस महत्वपूर्ण पहल के लिए आईसीएआर और इसके सहयोगी संस्थानों के प्रयासों की सराहना करता हूँ।


(राम नाथ ठाकुर)

दिनांक 11 मार्च 2026





FOREWORD

Dr M.L. Jat

Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research and Education,
Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India
& Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research

WOMEN represent the mainstay of rural, agrarian development in India. They play a vital role in ensuring food security, improving nutrition, and supporting family livelihoods through their hard work and dedication. In the evolving agricultural landscape, women are increasingly contributing across the entire value chain—from production, processing, and value addition to marketing—reflecting the ongoing transition from traditional production-centric agriculture to integrated agri-food systems. They are true drivers of growth and prosperity in rural areas. Women are also central to household nutrition and health outcomes, as they play a key role in food preparation, dietary diversity, and the adoption of healthy food practices within families and communities. Therefore, it is important to recognize and appreciate their efforts and more importantly, provide them with better opportunities for empowerment and development. Given their expanding and multidimensional role in agriculture and agri-food systems, empowering women farmers through access to resources, decision-making opportunities, and institutional support becomes not only a matter of equity but also a strategic imperative for sustainable agricultural development.

The United Nations' has declared 2026 as the International Year of Women Farmers and I am proud to witness to their indomitable spirit and successful journey. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) proudly unveils the compendium of *"Case Studies – Women and Agriculture: Shaping the Future Together"* that chronicles the extraordinary journeys of rural women whose innovations are reshaping the landscape of Indian agriculture. At a time when technology is rapidly transforming agriculture, the infusion of modern tools such as digital advisory platforms, climate-smart farming practices, improved post-harvest technologies, and innovative agro-processing methods is enabling women farmers to enhance productivity, reduce drudgery, and expand their participation in higher-value segments of the agri-food system.

This compendium is a sincere attempt to showcase the remarkable success of farm women innovators who have defied the odds, overcome socio-economic barriers, and emerged as trailblazers in their own right. Their stories are a testament to the transformative power of agriculture, and the immense potential that lies within our rural womenfolk. Through their experiences, we witness the perfect blend of traditional wisdom, innovative spirit, and determination, which has enabled them to excel in diverse areas such as organic farming, animal husbandry, agro-processing, and more. In recent years, the growing importance of resilient and localized food systems has further highlighted the indispensable role of women, who often act as custodians of local crops, traditional food knowledge, and community-based food networks.

The ICAR is committed to promote gender equity and inclusivity in agriculture, and this publication is a step in that direction. By highlighting the exemplary achievements of these women innovators, we aim to create a ripple effect, inspiring others to take up agriculture as a viable career option, and empowering them to become change agents in their own communities. Empowered women farmers not only strengthen farm productivity and agri-food enterprises but also contribute significantly to improved household nutrition, community health, and sustainable rural livelihoods.

I sincerely appreciate the dedicated efforts of the contributors in bringing out this valuable publication that will serve as an important resource for policymakers, researchers, development professionals, and students as well. I believe that this compendium will inspire the next generation of women to pursue their aspirations and meaningfully contribute to the advancement of India's agricultural sector. I would like to express my gratitude to all the women innovators whose stories have been featured in this compendium that will have a lasting impact on our readers.

Date: 7 March 2026
New Delhi



(M.L. Jat)

PREFACE

INDIAN agriculture is undergoing a profound transformation marked by innovation, sustainability, and inclusive development. Central to this transition are millions of farm women, whose dedication, knowledge, and resilience sustain rural livelihoods and national food security. Often working behind the scenes, women contribute significantly across crop production, livestock management, fisheries, and value addition, while simultaneously nurturing households and communities. Their role in adopting climate-resilient practices, conserving biodiversity, and strengthening local economies is increasingly being recognized. As the nation advances toward equitable growth and sustainable development, acknowledging and celebrating the leadership and enterprise of women farmers becomes both, a responsibility and an inspiration for future generations. It is with great desire and a sense of profound admiration that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi, publishes this inspiring volume, showcasing the triumphant tales of farm women innovators, who have defied conventions and redefined the agricultural landscape. These extraordinary women, hailing from the rural heartlands of India, have emerged as beacons of hope, transforming their lives and communities through their indomitable spirit, unyielding passion, and unwavering dedication to the pursuit of agricultural excellence.

In the vast and diverse tapestry of Indian agriculture, where tradition meets transformative change, women innovators have emerged as the driving force behind many remarkable success stories. By blending indigenous knowledge with scientific innovation, they have not only enhanced productivity and profitability but also demonstrated, how creativity and courage can convert constraints into opportunities. In resource-limited settings, where access to land, credit, technology, and markets often remains unequal, these women have introduced novel practices, adopted climate-resilient technologies, diversified enterprises, and built sustainable value chains. Through experimentation, adaptation, and leadership, they have transformed small farms into vibrant models of efficiency and sustainability. Each story stands as compelling evidence that innovation is not confined to laboratories or institutions, it thrives in fields, households, and communities led by determined women. The success stories featured in this volume underscore the pivotal role of women innovators in shaping the future of agriculture and rural development. They highlighted the urgent need to invest in women-centric research, extension services, skill development, and institutional support systems that nurture their potential. Empowering women innovators is not merely a matter of equity; it is a strategic imperative for sustainable agricultural growth and national prosperity. As we strive to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) and Goal 5 (Gender Equality), the experiences of these women serve as a powerful pathway of the critical role that women play in achieving these objectives.

This volume, therefore, is not just a compilation of achievements, it is a tribute to visionary women farmers and entrepreneurs, who have transformed challenges into milestones. It celebrates their pioneering spirit, their capacity to innovate under constraints, and their commitment to uplifting their families and communities. Their experiences offer invaluable lessons in leadership, adaptability, and inclusive development, serving as an enduring source of inspiration for aspiring women farmers and entrepreneurs, researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners.

[Editors]

Date: 7 March 2026

Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi



INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the foundation of human survival and economic development. It provides food, nutrition, livelihoods, and raw materials, while sustaining rural communities and cultural traditions. Behind this vast and vital sector are millions of individuals, whose daily efforts ensure productivity and resilience. Among them, women have always played a crucial and indispensable role. From sowing seeds to harvesting, storage to processing, marketing, and preserving resources, women's contributions have shaped agriculture across generations. Women are also playing a key role in promoting sustainable agriculture. In many farming households, women also manage livestock, kitchen gardens, and value addition activities that improve family income and nutrition. Their practices often focus on resource conservation, soil health, water management, biodiversity protection, and climate resilience. Despite their extensive involvement, women's work in agriculture has often remained underreported and unrecognized. Social norms and gender-based responsibilities further increase their workload and reduce their visibility as farmers and entrepreneurs. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Conducted during the year in India 2023-24, 59.8 percent of rural households depend on agriculture, where in 76.9 percent of rural female workers are engaged in agriculture, as compared with 49.4 percent of rural male workers.

Increasing awareness, supportive policies, improved access to education, and the expansion of self-help groups, cooperatives, and women-led enterprises are enabling women to take leadership roles in agriculture. Today, women are emerging as successful farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, innovators, and community leaders. Many are engaged in agri-processing, packaging, branding, and direct marketing through Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and online platforms. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) through its dedicated Institute i.e., Central Institute for Women in Agriculture; Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and various 'Women-Centric Programmes' are continuously empowering women farmers through gender responsive technologies and package of practices, women friendly tools, and outreach activities. These interventions have enabled women to develop their skills, enhance their livelihoods, and assume leadership roles in their communities.

This publication is a testament to ICAR's commitment to promoting women's empowerment in agriculture and recognizing the contributions of women farmers to Indian agriculture. This compendium presents a collection of **case studies of women in agriculture shaping the future together** that showcase the inspiring stories of rural women who have transformed the agricultural landscape of India. These stories reflect the determination, innovation, and leadership of women, who have transformed challenges into opportunities. They represent achievements in crop production, horticulture, livestock, fisheries, agroforestry, organic farming, agri-processing, agribusiness, and agricultural extension. Together, these narratives highlight how women are not only the participants in agriculture, but also happen to be the pioneers of change.

The primary objectives of publishing this compendium are:

- 1. To recognize and celebrate the achievements of women farmers:** This publication aims to acknowledge the tireless efforts and contributions of women farmers, who have made a significant impact on Indian agriculture.
- 2. To promote women's empowerment in agriculture:** By showcasing the success stories of women farmers, this compendium aims to inspire and empower other women to take up agriculture as a viable career option and pursue their passion for farming.
- 3. To highlight the importance of gender-responsive agricultural policies and programmes:** This publication underscores the need for policies and programmes that address the specific needs and challenges faced by women farmers, while promoting gender equality and equity in agriculture.

4. To document and disseminate innovative agricultural practices: The stories featured in this book demonstrate the innovative approaches and solutions developed by women farmers to address climate change, water scarcity, and other challenges, thereby providing valuable lessons for other farmers and stakeholders.

5. To contribute to the global initiative on women in agriculture: The International Year of Women Farmers (IYWF), as proclaimed by the United Nations for 2026, presents a propitious opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of women farmers and promote their role in agricultural development. The ICAR is proud to contribute to this global initiative by highlighting the achievements of India's Women Farmer Innovators (WFI).

Rather than focusing only on statistics or general discussions, this publication brings forward real-life experiences that show how success is built through hard work, creativity, and perseverance. The journey of success of 121 women farmers and/or entrepreneurs featured in this compendium are from different socio-economic backgrounds, agro-climatic regions, and agricultural sectors. Some started with very small resources and gradually built sustainable enterprises. Others introduced innovative technologies, adopted climate-resilient practices, or created value-added products that increased profitability. Many of them have also trained other women farmers, formed women collectives, and contributed to community development. These stories demonstrate that success in agriculture is not limited to large land-holdings or advanced infrastructure. With the right knowledge, support, and determination, even small initiatives can grow into impactful models.

Although each story in this book is unique, several common themes emerge:

- **Innovation and Learning:** Many innovators succeed in enhancing their farm productivity and thereby income by adopting new technologies, improved agricultural practices, and continuous learning through training and extension services.
- **Entrepreneurship and Value Addition:** Several shepreneurs have moved beyond primary production to processing, packaging, and marketing, while creating profitable agribusiness models and employment opportunities in rural India.
- **Climate Resilience and Sustainability:** Women are actively adopting water-efficient technologies, organic inputs, intensification practices, diversified farming systems, and integrated farming techniques to cope up with climate variability.
- **Collective Action and Leadership:** These successful stories also highlighted the role of self-help groups, cooperatives, and women-led producer organizations in improving access to technology, inputs, credit, and markets, and thereby strengthening community development.
- **Resilience and Determination:** Almost every journey of success reflected the ability of women innovators to overcome resource limitations, financial constraints, natural disasters, personal hardships and social barriers through persistence and confidence.

Successful practices and innovative approaches documented here can be replicated or adapted in other regions as well. Taken together, these case studies convey a powerful message that women are given opportunities, resources and recognition, they can transform agriculture and rural livelihoods! Their success helped them improve their household income, enhanced food and nutritional security, created employment, and strengthened community resilience. This book is intended for a wide range of readers, including farmers, students, extension professionals, researchers, development practitioners, and policymakers. Each story reflects practical experiences and lessons, that can guide future efforts toward gender-inclusive agricultural development.

The journey towards gender equality in agriculture is still ongoing. Challenges such as unequal access to land, finance, technology, and markets continue to exist. However, the stories presented here show that progress is indeed possible and that women are already leading this transformation in many ways. It is hoped that this compendium will encourage greater investment in women farmers, stronger institutional support, and wider recognition of their role in achieving sustainable agricultural growth. More importantly, it aims to inspire many more women to step forward with confidence, innovation, and leadership.

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CASE STUDIES

Women and Agriculture: Shaping the Future Together

THIS publication brings forward real-life experiences that show how success is built through hard work, creativity, and perseverance. The journey of success of 121 women farmers and/or entrepreneurs featured in this compendium are from different socio-economic backgrounds, agro-climatic regions, and agricultural sectors. Some started with very small resources and gradually built sustainable enterprises. Others introduced innovative technologies, adopted climate-resilient practices, or created value-added products that increased profitability. Many of them have also trained other women farmers, formed women collectives, and contributed to community development. These stories demonstrate that success in agriculture is not limited to large land-holdings or advanced infrastructure. With the right knowledge, support, and determination, even small initiatives can grow into impactful models.

01. Revitalising Traditional Rice and Millets through Women Entrepreneurship

Profile

Name	: Manimozhi
Age	: 50 years
Education	: 10th standard
Mobile No	: 9688530220
Address	: Soraputhur, Thellar, Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise	: Millet and traditional rice-based value-added products



Background

Mrs. Manimozhi, a progressive farmer from Vandavasi, cultivated traditional rice and other crops on 6 acres. Despite hard work, her income was irregular due to fluctuating market prices and raw produce sales. Inspired by neighbouring women's success in value addition, she aspired to start a self-employment venture using her farm produce, but lacked technical knowledge on processing, packaging, branding, and regulatory requirements.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point in her journey came when she actively participated in programmes organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Thiruvannamalai. She underwent a 20-day intensive training programme on livelihood improvement through millet, traditional rice, groundnut-based products, milk, and herbal products for SHG members, sponsored by NABARD since May 2024. Through these programmes, she gained hands-on exposure to value addition technologies, enterprise planning, and quality management practices, which laid the foundation for her entrepreneurial transformation.

Pathway to Progress

With ICAR-KVK's support, she transformed her farming venture into a thriving business, "Dhanushree Organic Foods", offering millet and rice-based products like Health Mix, Pongal Mix, and Millet Soup Mix. She adopted hygienic practices, got FSSAI licensing, MSME registration, and brand development help. Her products are sold locally and online, with family involvement making it a successful home-based enterprise.



Highlights

- » Farm-to-Enterprise Model: Utilizes own farm produce for value addition
- » Value Addition: Millet & traditional rice instant mixes, snacks, chutney powders, pickles
- » Market Linkages: Local shops and WhatsApp-based sales across Tamil Nadu
- » Women Empowerment: Enhanced income, confidence, and leadership
- » Annual income: around Rs. 6.62 lakh
- » Community Impact: Replication of enterprise by neighbouring women

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her value-added enterprise resulted in significant productivity and income enhancement. She successfully developed more than 15 value-added products, achieving a production capacity of 200–230kg per month with an average selling price of Rs. 450 per kg. This translated into a net monthly income of approximately Rs. 55,200, ensuring improved income stability and substantially reducing her dependence on raw agricultural produce sales.

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The success of *Dhanushree Organic Foods* significantly enhanced her self-confidence, decision-making ability, and social recognition as a woman

entrepreneur in her village. She emerged as a local leader among rural women and SHG members, demonstrating how traditional farming practices can be successfully transformed into a profitable enterprise through value addition.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Manimozhi's enterprise has inspired rural women to adopt millet and traditional rice value addition. Her unit acts as a learning model, leading to the establishment of two new women-led processing units in Thellar Block, promoting self-reliance and entrepreneurship.



02. Waste to Wealth: Sustainable Livelihoods through Vermicomposting and Kitchen Garden

Profile

Name : Pushpa Gautam
Age : 45 years
Education : Post Graduate
Mobile No : 9721224486
Address : Village-Bihra, Block Kaptanganj, District Basti, Uttar Pradesh
Enterprise : Vermicompost production (Major Enterprise), Agro-Processing and SHG-based enterprise development



Background

Mrs. Pushpa Gautam belongs to a small farmer family with limited land and traditional farming practices, low income, and they were economically vulnerable. She lacked awareness about vermicompost production and food processing, and marketing was a challenge too. Additionally, societal norms restricted women from pursuing entrepreneurship, limiting her growth opportunities. Sounds like she's got a lot to overcome.

Catalyst of Change

The major catalyst for her change was desire to become economically independent while improving family nutrition and utilizing farm waste effectively. The intervention by KVK, Basti was the major turning points in her journey. The KVK provided technical training, quality inputs for scientific vermicompost production, along with value addition and food processing trainings to enhance income from surplus farm produce.

Pathway to Progress

She has established a thriving vermicompost unit, turning farm waste into a valuable resource, producing 8-10 tonnes annually. Her kitchen garden supplies raw materials for a range of organic food products, made with traditional recipes and scientific techniques, without chemical preservatives. She's got a solid marketing strategy, selling through local markets, SHG networks, and direct sales. Her diversified nutrition garden reduces input costs and ensures quality raw materials. With strong local



Highlights

- » Waste to wealth model: Farm waste converted into income-generating organic manure
- » From subsistence to success: Rural woman builds a green enterprise through vermicomposting and food processing
- » Women-led change: Inspired 78 SHG women to adopt vermicompost, kitchen gardens, and value addition
- » More than doubled her annual income through women-led entrepreneurship

demand for her products, she's generating a steady income and scaling up her enterprise.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her income has taken a significant improvement. She is now earning Rs. 80,000-1,00,000/- annually, up from Rs. 3,000-4,000/- monthly reflecting a substantial shift from subsistence to sustainable, market-oriented livelihood. Her vermicompost and value-added products are selling well, and she is creating employment opportunities for herself, her family, and other SHG women.

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She expanded her activities through women Self Help Groups (SHGs), engaging members in processing, packaging, labelling, and pricing activities. Smt. Pushpa Gautam's entrepreneurial achievements in vermicomposting and value addition have been widely covered in print and electronic media, highlighting her receipt of prestigious recognitions such as the 'Krishi Samman' Award (Krishi Vipanan category) and the 'Sushil Devi Shobha Award' for her outstanding contribution to women-led agri-entrepreneurship and sustainable rural livelihoods

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Pushpa Gautam has promoted organic farming and efficient waste recycling by popularizing vermicomposting at the village level. Her interventions have contributed to the improvement of nutritional security and economic well-being of rural households through kitchen gardens and value-added food products. She has inspired and mobilized 78 women members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to adopt vermicompost units, nutrition gardens, and food processing activities, thereby strengthening women-led micro-enterprises.



[Source: P.K. Mishra and Anjali Verma (KVK, Basti, U.P.)]

03. Women-Led Rural Food Processing Enterprise: Transforming Livelihoods in Eastern Uttar Pradesh

Profile

Name : Durga Maurya
Age : 57 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9936179276
Address : Village-Baksha, Baksha,
District-Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh
Enterprise : Namkeen Making & Food Processing Unit



Background

Mrs. Durga Maurya comes from a rural farming family with irregular income and limited opportunities, she took matters into her own hands. She faced some major hurdles initially-no technical know-how on food processing, tight finances, and clunky marketing skills. But her drive to support her family and be financially independent pushed her to explore self-employment options, tapping into the growing demand for ready-to-eat snacks in rural areas.

Catalyst of Change

KVK's intervention proved a game-changer for her. They equipped her with the skills and knowledge to take her home-based food processing activity to the next level. With training on scientific namkeen processing, hygiene practices, and packaging, she's now producing high-quality products. Plus, they've helped her crack the code on pricing and profitability. It's awesome to see her confidence and business grow.

Pathway to Progress

She is selling her product under a brand name as 'Shresth' Namkeen. With KVK's technical support, she's producing a good quality namkeen products like sev, bhujija, and mixture. Her focus on quality products, which are very popular amongst consumers and being sold through local shops, markets, and even exhibitions. The demand of her products is increasing day by day.



Highlights

- » Established a women-led rural food processing enterprise (Namkeen Making Unit) under the brand 'Shresth'.
- » Transitioned from seasonal agriculture-dependent livelihood to a sustainable agri-processing business
- » Annual income increased more than threefold, from Rs. 3.0–4.0 lakh to Rs.10.00–12.50 lakh after intervention
- » Actively supports and motivates Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by sharing technical knowledge & experiences.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The adoption of scientific namkeen processing and value addition resulted in a substantial enhancement in productivity and income for Smt. Durga Maurya. Her annual income witnessed a remarkable rise—from Rs. 3.00–4.00 lakh before intervention to Rs. 10.00–12.50 lakh after intervention, reflecting a more than threefold increase in earnings, ensuring a stable and sustainable livelihood.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Durga Maurya was honoured with a Certificate of Appreciation (Samman Patra) by the Department of Agriculture, Government of Uttar Pradesh, District Jaunpur in 2025. The recognition was conferred for her outstanding performance and highest production of ragi in Jaunpur. In addition, she successfully

completed the Training of the Trainers (ToT) Programme on Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) conducted by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) at the IRRI South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC), Varanasi.

Influence on Other Farmers

By promoting hygienic and safe food production practices, she has raised awareness of food safety and quality standards at the village level. Adoption of improved processing, packaging, and cleanliness norms has positioned her enterprise as a model of responsible and sustainable rural entrepreneurship, contributing to women-led enterprise development and inclusive rural growth.



[Source: S.K. Kannaujiya and Pragati Yadav (KVK, Jaunpur, U.P.)]

04. Building Climate Resilient Livelihood through Integrated Farming

Profile

Name : Ranju Biswal
Age : 53 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile no : 7978757460
Address : Vill - Dubuduba, Dist- Puri, Odisha
Activities : Integrated farming system – Fisheries, Mushroom cultivation, Vegetable production, Backyard poultry, Beekeeping



Background

Mrs. Ranju Biswal belongs to a large nine-member family and worked as a helper at a local Anganwadi centre, earning a modest income that was insufficient to meet household needs. Although her village had abundant water resources, livelihood opportunities remained limited due to frequent floods, reliance on traditional practices, limited access to scientific knowledge and quality inputs, and recurring crop losses, which constrained diversification and income generation. Despite these challenges, she consistently demonstrated strong motivation, initiative, and leadership in learning new skills and exploring improved livelihood options.

Catalyst of Change

In 2017, ICAR-CIWA identified the potential of Smt. Ranju Biswal and provided focused trainings with continuous technical backstopping. Interventions included training in composite fish culture, scientific vegetable cultivation, mushroom production and value addition, backyard poultry with Vanaraja birds, and beekeeping. Institutional linkages with KVKs, ICAR institutes, State Fisheries Department, and NFDB ensured access to quality inputs, technologies, and sustained handholding for scaling the interventions

Pathway to Progress

Her journey reflects a structured pathway from skill development to sustainable enterprise growth. Institutional training and continuous technical guidance enabled her to adopt scientific farming practices. She diversified into fisheries, mushrooms, poultry, vegetables, and beekeeping to create



Highlights

- » Built a diversified livelihood system integrating fisheries, mushrooms, vegetables, poultry, beekeeping, and micro-retail.
- » Achieved a substantial increase in family income to ~Rs. 5.0 lakh/year.
- » Demonstrated successful women-led enterprise diversification: mushrooms (monthly income), poultry and vegetables (seasonal income), and aquaculture and apiculture (annual income).
- » Improved household nutrition, economic stability, and risk management through integrated farming.
- » Emerged as a local leader and role model, mentoring women farmers and promoting scientific, diversified agriculture in flood-prone areas.

multiple income streams. This integration ensured regular cash flow through monthly, seasonal, and annual returns. Efficient resource utilization enhanced productivity and reduced production risks. Institutional linkages improved access to quality inputs and modern technologies. The diversified model strengthened household nutrition, economic stability, and climate resilience. Today, she serves as a local role model promoting women-led, integrated agriculture.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

She adopted composite fish culture in her homestead pond, combined with three-tier mushroom cultivation, rearing of improved Vanaraja poultry, and cultivation of high-yielding vegetables. Further, diversification through scientific beekeeping enhanced both income and ecological benefits. Mushroom cultivation (~500 beds/month) yields about Rs. 7,000 per month, composite carp culture in a 0.28 ha pond provides Rs. 30,000 annually, backyard poultry (100 Vanaraja birds per cycle; two cycles/year) adds Rs. 60,000, and vegetable cultivation on 0.2 ha generates Rs. 70,000 within 3–4 months. Beekeeping with 100 hives contributes an additional Rs. 1,00,000 annually.

Overall, the integrated enterprises generate approximately Rs. 5.0 Lakh per year, improving household nutrition, livelihood security, and resilience to climatic shocks, while strengthening the family's long-established grocery business.

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a confident woman farmer and local leader, actively participating in household and farm-level decision-making. She has mobilized and mentored women farmers, facilitated exposure visits to R&D institutions, and gained recognition as a role model for diversified, climate-resilient livelihoods, earned progressive woman farmer award for her leadership and contributions.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Ranju Biswal has inspired several women farmers to adopt scientific and diversified farming practices. Through her leadership and on-field demonstration of successful interventions, she has motivated rural women to actively participate in extension and development programmes, leading to greater adoption of improved technologies and contributing to the strengthening of women-led agriculture in the region.



[Source: Tanuja, S., Jyoti Nayak, Arun Kumar Panda and Laxmipriya Sahoo (ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar)]

05. Aquaculture and Value Addition: Pathways to Women Empowerment

Profile

Name : Kausalya Kandi
Age : 48 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 8260411816
Address : Vill-Kanamana, Dist-Puri, Odisha
Enterprise : Fisheries (Aquaculture), Fish and Shellfish Value Addition,



Background

Mrs. Kausalya Kandi belonged to a landless household with no livestock assets. Her family depended solely on her husband's small fast-food cart, which provided irregular and insufficient income. Kausalya had limited access to productive resources, modern technologies, and reliable livelihood opportunities.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point came with the intervention of ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar which introduced Smt. Kausalya to aquaculture and fish-based value-added enterprises. Key support included hands-on training in fish, prawn, and crab farming; capacity building in fish and shellfish value addition, technical guidance and mentoring; and the provision of processing and value-addition equipment to the SHG through the village community resource centre.

Pathway to Progress

She leased ponds and adopted scientific aquaculture practices, diversified her activities into fish, prawn, and crab farming, and undertook value addition and processing of fish and shellfish products through collective SHG action. She also established an ornamental fish farming unit at the SHG level and further diversified household income through a family-run grocery shop.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her aquaculture enterprise expanded to nearly 2 acres of leased ponds, generating an average profit of about Rs. 1,000 per day. Value addition of fish and shellfish products provided an additional monthly



Highlights

- » Transformed from landless household to successful fish-preneur
- » Adopted leased-pond aquaculture with diversification into fish, prawn, and crab farming
- » Value addition of fish and shellfish products using SHG-based processing facilities and solar dryers
- » Established ornamental fish farming unit at SHG level for additional income
- » Emerging woman leader and master trainer, mentoring rural women in fisheries enterprises

income of approximately Rs. 8,000, while the family-run grocery shop contributed around Rs. 30,000 per month. As a result of this diversified livelihood strategy, the annual family income increased substantially from Rs. 1.8 Lakh to Rs. 6.5 Lakh, significantly strengthening livelihood security. These interventions created employment opportunities for herself and SHG members.

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a successful woman entrepreneur, community leader, and master trainer, exhibiting strong leadership, confidence, and technical competence in fisheries-based enterprises. Through mentoring and motivation, she has inspired many rural women to adopt fisheries-based livelihoods, earning recognition and respect as a role model for women's entrepreneurship and empowerment.

Influence on Other Farmers

Smt. Kausalya's success has inspired several women in her village and nearby areas to explore aquaculture, value addition, and ornamental fish farming. Her leadership has strengthened collective action within the SHG and demonstrated the viability of fisheries-based livelihoods for landless and resource-poor women.



[Source: Tanuja S. (ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar)]

06. Field to Future: Women-led Sustainable Livelihoods through Integrated Farming

Profile

Name : Kumudini Swain
Age : 41 years
Education : B.Sc. (Zoology), MBA
Mobile No : 7682012517
Address : Vill. Srirampur, Narisho, Balipatna, Khordha, Odisha
Enterprise : Integrated Farming & Agri-processing (Millet)



Background

Mrs. Kumudini Swain, a determined farm woman from coastal Odisha, overcame numerous challenges to become a leader in sustainable agriculture. Despite discontinuing her education due to financial constraints, she pursued an MBA and worked in the dairy sector, igniting her passion for livestock-based livelihoods. Kumudini's early life was marked by financial struggles, forcing her to discontinue education and work in the dairy sector. However, her determination and ambition led her to resume her studies and pursue a career in agri-business. The COVID-19 pandemic and cyclone-induced damages disrupted her dairy job and traditional farming activities, but she remained resilient and motivated to rebuild her livelihood.

Catalyst of Change

She continuous interaction with ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar, through a Krishak Sangosthi, marked a turning point in her journey. She received need-based training, capacity-building programs, and handholding support, developing technical competence and confidence to establish a women-centric Integrated Farming System (IFS). Recognizing the need for collective action and market linkage, she took a leadership role in mobilizing farmers towards formation of a Farmer Producer Organization (FPO). Gradually, 25 FIGs were brought together, leading to the establishment of a Farmer Producer Company Limited named "Maheera". Owing to her vision, leadership qualities, and grassroots credibility, she was unanimously elected as Chairperson of Maheera FPC Ltd.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted an IFS model, comprising 70 goats, 3 dairy cows, and 200 poultry birds, supported



Highlights:

- » Diversified Farming: Crop-livestock-poultry system, including goats, dairy cows, and poultry birds, fodder cultivation.
- » Value Addition: Runs a women-led unit making millet-based products, boosting income and nutrition.
- » Market Linkages: Sells products through Maheera FPO.
- » Women's Empowerment: Mentors other women farmers, leads SHG/FPO/community, and inspires women to become Atmanirbhar (self-reliant).
- » Awards & Recognition: 1st women Drone pilot in Odisha and Best Woman Farmer recognition by ICAR-CIWA.
- » Income Growth: Income jumped from ₹3 lakhs to 7.5 lakhs per year.

by fodder cultivation on 2 acres. She also undertakes paddy cultivation, vegetable cultivation, and diversified horticultural crop production, including papaya, apple ber, banana, mango, dragon fruit, and pineapple, along with vermicomposting.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Earned ₹3.5 lakhs per year through goat farming and poultry farming, and ₹2.3 lakhs per year through vegetable and horticultural crops.
- » Total income increased to ₹7.5 lakhs within a year through mushroom cultivation, vegetable cultivation, and horticultural crops.
- » Income increased by 2.5 times after adopting women-friendly New Agricultural Technologies from ICAR-CIWA.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She was awarded 1st women Drone pilot in Odisha

through Namo Drone Didi Programme of Govt. of India; Recognized as Best Woman Farmer by ICAR-CIWA, acknowledging her contributions to agriculture and women's empowerment; Innovative Award to Women Entrepreneur-COHORT-2-Conducted by ISAP India Foundation, Delhi.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Kumudini's success has inspired farm women from nearby villages. She mentors other women farmers, leading SHG/FPO/community initiatives, and serves as a role model for women in her community.



07. Building Climate Resilience in Rice Fallow Systems of Odisha

Profile

Name : Basanti Dehury
Age : 38 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 9078638548
Address : Vill - Budhipada, Dist- Keonjhar, Odisha
Activities : Rice – Sunflower – Hybrid Maize with value addition



Background

Mrs. Basanti Dehury, a resilient tribal farm woman from Bhudipada village in Keonjhar district, had been confronting multiple challenges in sustaining her agricultural livelihood. Owning a small landholding, she traditionally practiced mono-cropping of rice under rain-fed conditions, which made her farming system highly vulnerable to climate change. Erratic rainfall, declining soil fertility, and frequent yield fluctuations severely affected crop productivity and household income. Recognizing these constraints, Basanti Dehury gradually adopted improved and climate-resilient technologies under the ICAR-CIWA project, marking a significant shift from traditional practices towards a more diversified, resilient, and income-oriented farming system.

Catalyst of Change

Aligned with Odisha's broader vision for climate-resilient agriculture under Vision 2036 & 2047, ICAR-CIWA intervened through the Odisha Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture (OIIP CRA) Project by introducing a women-centric climate-smart agriculture (CSA) package. The interventions focused on capacity building, technology access, and institutional convergence. Access to climate-resilient seed varieties, strengthened crop performance under variable climatic conditions. In order to address underutilized rice-fallow lands, introduction of oilseed cultivation (sunflower and mustard) based on residual soil moisture enabled informed decisions on crop diversification. Institutional support through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and linkage with Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs) ensured timely access to farm machinery at affordable costs.

Pathway to Progress

With scientific guidance and institutional backing, Mrs. Basanti adopted a three-crop system—



Highlights

- » Climate-Smart Agriculture: Adoption of resilient seed varieties, mechanization, and crop diversification (paddy, sunflower, and hybrid maize) .
- » Income Doubles: Her annual income increased from Rs. 67,000 to Rs. 1,37,000, ensuring better livelihood security and economic empowerment.
- » Women’s Empowerment: Interventions enhanced her confidence, decision-making ability, and leadership, reducing drudgery and strengthening her role in farm planning and marketing.
- » Inspiring Change: Basanti’s success inspires farm women in surrounding villages to adopt climate-smart and women-friendly agricultural innovations, showcasing a scalable pathway for Atmanirbhar farm women.

rice, sunflower, and hybrid maize—transforming the local farming system from subsistence-oriented to market-linked and diversified system. Crop diversification was further strengthened through the establishment of oil pressing and extraction units within CHCs, creating a complete value chain from production to processing and marketing.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Earlier, her annual income was around Rs. 67,000/- only, primarily from crops mono-cropping of paddy. However, she faced multiple challenges such as low yields, limited surplus for the market, and reduced profitability. With the introduction of resilient seed varieties, improved rice production technologies with mechanization, sunflower cultivation, and hybrid maize, her farming system witnessed a remarkable transformation. As a result, her annual income has doubled to Rs. 1,37,000, ensuring better livelihood security and economic empowerment.



Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Beyond economic gains, the interventions significantly enhanced her confidence, decision-making ability, and leadership. Reduced drudgery through mechanization, collective action via SHG and value addition strengthened her role in farm planning and marketing. She is felicitated on different platforms as a successful farm woman.



Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Basanti’s success has emerged as a catalyst for change, inspiring farm women across surrounding villages to adopt climate-smart and women-friendly agricultural innovations. Her leadership demonstrates how women-led institutions, backed by scientific support and appropriate technologies, can transform vulnerable tribal agriculture into a resilient, profitable, and sustainable livelihood system. This ICAR–CIWA-supported model highlights the power of early adopters in driving collective action and showcases a scalable pathway for nurturing Atmanirbhar and empowered farm women while strengthening agri-food systems in climate-vulnerable regions.

[Source: Praveen Jakhar and Neetish Kumar (ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar)]

08. Backyard to Market: Bamboo Shoot Enterprise in North-Eastern Hill Region

Profile

Name : Naorem Haripyari Devi
Age : 49 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 8794810142
Address : Village-Kakching Paji Leikai,
District- Kakching, Manipur
Enterprise : Processing and value addition of bamboo shoot



Background

Mrs. Naorem Haripyari Devi, a forward-thinking farmer from Kakching Paji Leikai, Kakching district, Manipur, started her food processing venture with limited resources and minimal agricultural training, inspired by her family's passion. Initial results of the bamboo shoot processing were poor due to the lack of scientific methods. After consulting KVK Thoubal, she adopted improved bamboo shoot processing and value addition techniques. She sources raw shoots from Kwatha and nearby villages, using simple, indigenous fermentation for cost-effective, culturally rooted products that boost production and profitability.

Catalyst of Change

She actively participated in training programmes conducted by KVK Thoubal, including method demonstrations on bamboo shoot processing and value addition, with a focus on proper packaging, labelling, and branding to strengthen her technical knowledge.

Pathway to progress

After receiving training and continuous guidance from KVK & ICAR, she procures fresh bamboo shoots at Rs. 40-50 per kg. She processes 800-1,000 kg annually using a two-stage fermentation method that takes 5-6 months. The sliced shoots are partially fermented in plastic containers and then tightly packed in plastic bags, placed inverted in large bamboo baskets, lined with perforated polythene and pressed with heavy stones for proper fermentation.



Highlights

- » Adopted of improved processing, packaging, and branding practices enabled her to process 800–1,000 kg of bamboo shoots annually with a B:C ratio of 2.06.
- » Her products are marketed locally and in outlets across Manipur, Guwahati, and Shillong, expanding market reach beyond the state.
- » Receive Land Accelerator South Asia 2021 grand prize (Rs. 2,55,000);
- » The enterprise generates employment for over 30 skilled and unskilled workers, particularly women, strengthening rural livelihoods.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

- » Raw Material Cost: Rs. 1,10,000 for sourcing bamboo shoots.
- » Labour Charges: Rs. 19,200 for processing and handling.
- » Packaging and Labelling: Rs. 20,000 for product preparation and branding.
- » Total Cost: Rs. 1,55,200 encompassing all operational expenses.
- » Gross Income: Rs. 3,20,000 from sales of fermented bamboo shoots.
- » Net Return: Rs. 1,64,800 as profit after deductions.
- » B:C Ratio: 2.06, indicating strong profitability and efficiency.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The fermented bamboo shoot processing technology is well-accepted by farmers for its market availability, ready-to-cook convenience, easy transport via odour-reducing packaging, and enhanced consumer appeal. Traditional Manipuri communities, especially those outside the state or abroad, favour it for its authentic taste and cultural value, highlighting the need to preserve indigenous knowledge for food security and sustainable farmer incomes. Kakching's unique product is popular in local diets, with large-scale production creating jobs for over 30 labourers in peeling, slicing, processing, branding, labeling, and packaging. She has also received Land Accelerator South Asia 2021 grand prize (Rs. 2,55,000); RKVY-RAFTAAR Rs. 5 lakh sanction (2022, MANAGE Hyderabad) for upgrade stall at CAU Regional Agri Fair 2023-24 (Chumoukedima, Dimapur, Nagaland).

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Naorem Haripyari Devi strongly influences farmers and women in Kakching through her bamboo shoot enterprise, showcasing how traditional knowledge transforms into profitable, sustainable agribusiness via scientific methods. By sharing experiences, know-how, and techniques, she mentors others especially women to adopt processing for income generation, inspiring new units and wider standardized practices.



[Source: Kh. Premalata Devi, R.K. Lembisana Devi and S. Prabin Singh (KVK, Thoubal, Manipur)]

09. Betel Vine Cultivation through Natural Farming for Economic Prosperity

Profile

Name : Sarojini Nayak
Age : 40 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 6371835202
Address : Vill- Dhanahara, Dist-Khordha, Odisha
Enterprise : Horticulture - Betel vine (*Paan*) cultivation under Natural Farming



Background

Betel vine cultivation is a traditional and economically significant enterprise in coastal Odisha. Like many farmers, Mrs. Sarojini Nayak initially practiced conventional methods relying heavily on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Although these inputs supported short-term yields, they gradually led to higher cultivation costs, declining soil health, and concerns over human and environmental safety. Despite being a family-based enterprise, she faced constraints such as limited technical knowledge, dependence on external inputs, and the challenge of managing this sensitive crop.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point came when Mrs. Sarojini attended a Sensitization and Awareness Programme on "Natural Farming and its Sustainable Benefits" organized by ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar. Motivated by concerns for her family's health, soil sustainability, and rising input costs, she decided to gradually transition her Paan Baraja to a natural farming system. Her journey was further strengthened when she became an active member of the Women Farmers' Interest Group (FIG) "Dhanahara Organics". Through ICAR-CIWA's continuous support, she received hands-on training, capacity building, and demonstration on preparation and application of natural farming inputs such as Jeevamrut, Beejamrut, Ghanajeevamrut, Neemastra, Agniastra, Brahmastra, vermicompost, and Handikhata (pot manure/medicine).

Pathway to Progress

She adopted a holistic natural farming approach in betel vine cultivation by planting disease-free vine cuttings on raised beds to ensure proper drainage and treating them with Beejamrut before planting. Jeevamrut was applied fortnightly through root-zone drenching, while Ghanajeevamrut and compost



Highlights

- » Natural Farming Transition: Shifted from chemical-based to holistic natural farming in betel vine cultivation with technical support from ICAR-CIWA.
- » Cost & Soil Health Benefits: Reduced cultivation cost by ~₹12,000 per 400 m² while improving soil health and plant vigour.
- » Market Linkages: Sells betel leaves through local haats and vendors supplying to Bhubaneswar, Kolkata, and Mumbai markets.
- » Women's Empowerment & Leadership: Emerged as a key decision-maker, local resource person, and role model inspiring more than women farmers to adopt natural farming.

were supplemented every 45-60 days to maintain soil fertility. Trichoderma-enriched compost was used to manage soil-borne diseases. Preventive plant protection included regular Neemastra sprays, application of Brahmastra/Agniastra during leaf development to control sucking pests, and the use of buttermilk spray or diluted cow urine to suppress foliar fungal infections. Soil application of neem and mustard oilcake at six-month intervals further strengthened pest control. These practices enabled her to improve crop health and steadily progress towards a sustainable, chemical-free betel vine production system.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The adoption of this practice resulted in a substantial reduction in the cost of cultivation, with savings of about ₹12,000 per 400 m² compared to the conventional farming system. The yield also remained comparable to that of conventional cultivation. Annual betel vine production increased

steadily over the years, from approximately 1.5 lakh leaves in the first year to about 3.65 lakh leaves by the fourth year. Correspondingly, gross returns improved from around ₹75,000 in the first year to ₹1,82,000 in the fourth year. The reduction in expenditure was primarily due to a significant decrease in the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, leading to considerable input cost savings. Smt. Sarojini sells betel leaves directly in local weekly haats (Dhanahara, Narada, Banamalipur) and through vendors supplying to Bhubaneswar markets. Her produce also reaches distant markets such as Kolkata and Mumbai, ensuring regular cash flow and market stability.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Emerged as an active decision-maker in farm management and marketing
- » Recognized as a local resource person for natural farming
- » Balances collective action (FIG activities) with individual entrepreneurship
- » Gains respect within family and community as a successful woman farmer innovator
- » Inspired more than 20 neighbouring women farmers to adopt natural farming

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Sarojini Nayak's journey demonstrates how institutional support, confidence building, and women-centric capacity development can transform traditional farming systems into sustainable, profitable, and eco-friendly enterprises. Her *Paan Baraja* represents a demonstration model of natural farming, proving that women farmers can be powerful change agents in promoting sustainable agri-food systems while ensuring healthy soils, safer food, and resilient livelihoods.



10. Women-led Bio-input Enterprises: Strengthening Sustainable Agricultural System

Profile

Name	: Tai Nayak
Age	: 56 years
Education	: Primary education
Mobile No	: 6371564374
Address	: Vill- Dhanahara, Dist- Khordha, Odisha
Enterprise	: Vermicomposting, Bio-input resource production



Background

In Dhanahara village, most women were traditionally engaged as agricultural labourers or small cultivators, contributing significantly to farm operations but remaining economically dependent and technologically marginalized. Natural farming practices were slowly gaining attention in the region, yet the unavailability of affordable and quality bio-inputs posed a major constraint for farmers. Individual preparation of bio-inputs was labour-intensive, time-consuming, and often inconsistent in quality, limiting wider adoption of chemical-free farming.

Catalyst of Change

Recognizing the dual opportunity of promoting natural farming and women's empowerment, ICAR-CIWA initiated the formation of a Women Farmers' Interest Group (FIG) named 'Dhanahara Organics', comprising of 42 women farmers, mobilized through continuous interactions, confidence-building exercises, and awareness programmes. Smt. Tai Nayak, a progressive vermicompost producer, was identified as the group leader and master trainer, while Smt. Smrutirekha Nayak played a key role in mobilizing women from SHGs and establishing market linkages.

Pathway to Progress

ICAR-CIWA supported the initiative through critical input provision and intensive hands-on training on the scientific preparation of vermicompost, Jeevamrut, Ghanajeevamrut, and Handikhata. A common site within the village was identified and developed into a women-led Bio-input Resource Production Unit, based on the availability of a desi cow, water, electricity, space, raw materials, and road connectivity, functioning as a hub for collective production, training, and demonstrations. While vermicomposting and Ghanajeevamrut preparation were carried out at the household level,



Highlights

- » Women-Led Bio-input Enterprise: Leads Dhanahara Organics FIG in vermicompost and natural bio-input production.
- » From Labour to Agripreneurship: Enabled women to shift from farm labourers to skilled agri-input producers.
- » Community-Based Bio-input Production: Collective unit for vermicompost, Jeevamrut, Ghanajeevamrut, Handikhata, and botanicals.
- » Economic Profitability: Annual sales of ₹5.5 lakh with a recurring cost of ₹70,000 and profit 4.80 Lakhs
- » Multiple channel marketing: Supplies to local farmers, village vendors, FPOs, and exhibitions/fairs.
- » Promoting Natural Farming: The production unit also serves as a training and demonstration hub, expanding access to affordable bio-inputs and promoting chemical-free farming.

marketing. They also gained recognition within family and community as successful women agripreneurs.

Influence on Other Farmers

Increased availability of affordable bio-inputs promoted the adoption of natural farming in surrounding villages. The unit functions as a training and demonstration centre for other women farmers. The members in the group also provide on-field services such as Jeevamrut preparation for fellow farmers.



the preparation of botanical formulations such as Handikhata, Agniashtra, and Brahmastra, along with packaging, labelling was centralized at the unit. Activities were organized on a rotational and participatory basis to ensure equitable labour sharing and strong group ownership. For marketing and income generation, the group adopted a multi-channel strategy involving direct sales to local farmers, supply through village-level vendors, institutional linkages with FPOs such as Tasty Veg and Kusabhadr, and participation in exhibitions and farmer fairs.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The group with annual sales for Rs. 5,50,000 with a recurring cost of 70,000/-, thereby earning a profit of Rs. 4.80 Lakhs

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The women in the group transitioned from farm labourers to agri-input producers with active participation in bio-input production, and

11. Millet Processing for Economic Empowerment and Nutritional Security

Profile

Name	:	Tilottama Majhi
Age	:	48 years
Education	:	12th standard
Mobile No	:	9337184593
Address	:	Vill – Nunukua, Distrist – Jagatsinghpur, Odisha
Enterprise	:	Millet Processing



Background

Mrs. Tilottama Majhi belongs to Nunukua, a village in Kujanga Block of Jagatsinghpur District, Odisha, struggled with low farm incomes and limited value addition. Being a rural woman from under-privileged section of the society, she faced challenges like poverty, poor market access, and social constraints and gender-related biases.

Catalyst of Change

ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar, under the SCSP programme, strengthened the Maa Taratarini Women Self Help Group (SHG) during 2022–23 by establishing a Custom Hiring Centre (CHC). The 11-member SHG, guided by President Mrs. Pranati Tarai and Secretary Mrs. Tilottama Majhi, received machinery and technical support, including two mini rice mill-cum-pulverisers and two wet grinders. These facilities enabled value addition of millets into products such as ragi mixture, cookies, aarisha, rose cake, sev and multigrain chhatua. Raw materials were sourced from millet-rich districts of Odisha. ICAR-CIWA provided hands-on training in processing, packaging, branding and business skills, improving product quality, reducing labour and enhancing marketability of nutritious foods.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted diversified and sustainable food processing practices of popular millets products: Ragi Mixture, Ragi Cookies, Ragi Aarisha, Ragi Rose Cake, Ragi Sev, and Multigrain Chhatua etc. In addition to that, she started milling of rice in a small scale and making wadi in larger quantity. Crop cultivation of paddy, pulses, and vegetables as well as fisheries, and dry fish with ICAR-CIWA's support enriches the financial condition and she could enhanced the productivity of the Maa Tara Tarini SHG.



Highlights

- » Value Addition: Established a women-led 'Matrushakti Millet PG' for development of millet based products and making dry fish boosting income and nutrition.
- » Market Linkages: Sells millet based products through Anganwadi schools, local hats, district exhibition fairs, kisan melas, state functions as well as at the local Market
- » Income Growth: Income increased from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 15.60 Lakh per annum.
- » Community Impact: Inspires women from nearby villages to adopt innovative products development, marketing skills, business model for better revenue generation enabling the CHC into self-sustainable mode.

acknowledging her contributions to agriculture and women's empowerment. She mentors other women farmers, leading SHG/FPO/community initiatives, and serves as a role model for women in her community.

Influence on Other Farmers

After receiving capacity building, skill-based training, and input support, SHG members adopted income-generating activities such as improved cropping, vegetable cultivation, backyard poultry, and value addition. These interventions enhanced income, livelihood security, and confidence. Their success created a strong demonstration effect, motivating women from SC and marginalized communities to adopt scientific practices. SHG members emerged as local resource persons, guiding others on improved farming, group management, and collective marketing. As a result, neighboring families adopted similar technologies, formed new SHGs and FIGs, and strengthened women-led, community-based agricultural development under the SCSP programme.



Productivity & Income Enhancement

Tilittama's efforts led to significant improvements:

- » Increased income from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 15,60,000 per annum of the SHG
- » Improved productivity of the SHG
- » Reduced drudgery and cost of production
- » Enhanced food security and nutrition for her family

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Tilottata's achievements earned her recognition as
- » *Kalinga Kanya Samman-2024* by Pratibha Samman Odisha Trust.
- » *Block level Fisheries and Animal Science Award 2025*.
- » *Shyamala Subarna Saphala Mahila Udyogi Sammana-2022* by Shyamala Subarna Agro Pvt Ltd.
- » *Innovative Farmer Award* by Pragati International Scientific Research Foundation, India.
- » Best Women Farmer award from ICAR-CIWA,

12. Traditional Farming to Profitable Tomato Cultivation in North-Eastern Hills

Profile

Name : Hmingthanzami
Age : 42 years
Education : Middle School
Mobile No : 8974184314
Address : Village-Neihdawn, Champai, Mizoram
Activities : Agriculture – Tomato cultivation



Background

Mrs. Hmingthanzami from Neihdawn village of Champhai District, Mizoram was earlier practising traditional farming with limited focus on improved crop management. She was cultivating Tomato using local varieties without proper nursery management, balanced fertilization, or plant protection measures. As a result, productivity was low, pest and disease incidence was high, and income from tomato cultivation remained uncertain. Limited technical knowledge, poor access to quality inputs, and lack of exposure to scientific practices further affected her farm performance.

Catalyst of Change

The transformation began, when Hmingthanzami came under the guidance of KVK Champhai District. She participated in training programmes, frontline demonstrations, and advisory services on scientific tomato cultivation. She received technical support on selection of improved tomato varieties, nursery raising, transplanting techniques, integrated nutrient management, integrated pest management, and proper harvesting practices. KVK also facilitated timely access to quality seeds and regular field-level guidance.

Pathway to Progress

She transformed her tomato cultivation practices by adopting innovative and scientific practices recommended by KVK, including improved varieties, scientific nursery raising, healthy seedling transplantation, balanced nutrient management, and integrated pest and disease management.



Highlights

- » Mrs. Hmingthanzami transformed her traditional tomato cultivation practices by adopting scientific practices under the guidance of KVK Champhai, including improved varieties, nursery management, balanced fertilization, and integrated pest management.
- » Tomato productivity increased by 35–40%, raising her annual income from Rs.45,000 to Rs. 1,20,000–Rs.1,50,000, while reducing pest and disease losses.

Timely harvesting and proper post-harvest handling enhanced produce quality and market value. These interventions significantly increased her income, reduced crop losses, improved household nutrition, strengthened livelihood security, and created seasonal self-employment opportunities for family members.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Productivity: Improved practices increased tomato yield by 35–40%.
- » Income: Annual income rose from Rs. 45,000 to Rs.1,20,000–1,50,000.
- » Impact: Reduced losses, improved nutrition, and provided seasonal self-employment.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Through successful tomato cultivation, Mrs. Hmingthanzami gained confidence and recognition within her family and village. She now actively participates in farm planning and decision-making. Her success has encouraged other women farmers to take up scientific tomato cultivation. She often shares her experience during farmer scientist interactions organized by KVK Champhai, emerging as a role model for women in agriculture.

Influence on Other Farmers

The visible success of Mrs. Hmingthanzami's tomato crop has motivated several farmers from Neihdawn and nearby villages to adopt improved tomato cultivation practices. Many farmers now consult her and KVK Champhai for technical guidance, contributing to wider adoption of scientific tomato farming in the district. Her demonstration of higher productivity and income has encouraged wider adoption of scientific and sustainable tomato farming across the district, positively impacting livelihoods and promoting knowledge-sharing among the farming community.



[Source: Malsawmkimi and Laingaihawmi (KVK, Champhai, Mizoram)]

13. Cultivating Change: A Rural Transformation in Rajasthan

Profile

Name : Shanta Patel
Age : 40 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 9602120165
Address : C/o Suresh Patel, Post- Mada Teba,
Vill. Mada, Dist. Dungarpur- 314001,
Rajasthan Enterprise - Agri-business



Background

In the harsh and hilly terrain of Dungarpur, Rajasthan, Smt. Shanta Patel has spent 15 years perfecting the technique of vegetable farming. Her family's income was dependent on conventional farming practices for more than ten years. The difficult terrain of the area and unpredictable weather conditions frequently put these methods at risk. The area had natural benefits like an excellent supply of groundwater and the potential to grow vegetables. However, the yields remained unstable in the absence of modern methods. The family had little space for growth or financial security as the harvest barely met their basic needs. After years of working in this cycle of life, Smt. Shanta concluded that manual labour was not enough to overcome the physical and economic limitations of the area.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point in Mrs. Shanta's life came, when she realized that her family's future depended not only on hard work, but also on adopting innovative and scientific farming practices. Motivated by the aspiration for a better livelihood, she sought technical guidance from KVK, Dungarpur, MPUAT, Udaipur, Rajasthan. She actively participated in various training programmes on improved packages of practices, which transformed her from a traditional cultivator into a well-informed farmer confidently adopting scientific methods in agriculture.

Pathway to Progress

She has emerged as a progressive vegetable grower by implementing several key technical innovations:

- » Precision Water Management: She switched from ineffective flood irrigation to high-efficiency sprinkler and drip systems.



Highlights

- » A community leader & a strong pillar for empowerment of rural women
- » From working harder to working smarter leading to progressive vegetable grower
- » Empowered 200 rural women
- » Promoting on-farm needed infrastructure
- » Annual Income: Rs 18 Lakhs
- » By integrating on-farm grading and packing for her produce, she has successfully added value to the harvested items. This allows her to command higher market prices rather than selling raw, ungraded produce.

- » Soil Health & Nutrition: To ensure her crops are grown in nutrient-rich soil adopting chemical free practices, she established a dedicated Vermicompost unit on her farm.
- » Climate Resilience: Use of plastic mulching to preserve soil moisture and to protect her crops from the harsh, hilly climate.
- » Farm mechanization: Smt Shanta scaled her operations by investing in farm machinery and purchased tractors and land levellers.
- » Quality Control: She created a raised bed nursery system to ensure the production of good-quality seedlings.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her farm is now an efficient farm that manages the entire supply chain from 'seed to shelf'. She has built a self-sustaining infrastructure that includes a

farm pond for water security and on-site warehouses for storage. These additions have significantly reduced the post-harvest losses that was previously a major challenge being faced by the family. With an average daily sale of Rs. 7,000, Smt. Shanta is now earning a remarkable income of Rs. 18.0 lakhs per annum.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition:

Mrs. Shanta Patel's transition from a subsistence farmer to a visionary community leader is recognized at the level of family and society. Her success has been decorated with numerous district, state, and national awards. However, her most significant contribution remains the social empowerment of women of her area. She has personally mentored over 200 rural women, teaching them the sustainable and modern techniques that revolutionized the livelihood of her own family. Smt Shanta has brought both financial independence and a renewed sense of pride to the women of her region.



Influence on Other Farmers

Beyond her farm, she has established herself as a community leader by empowering 200 rural women through improved package of practices for overall livelihood security. Shanta Patel's success has had a strong ripple effect across her village and neighboring areas. By openly demonstrating scientific vegetable cultivation practices—such as drip irrigation, vermicomposting, plastic mulching, and raised-bed nurseries—she has inspired other farmers to move away from traditional, low-yield methods. Farmers regularly visit her fields to observe these practices firsthand and seek guidance on improving productivity and income. Through trainings, field demonstrations, and personal mentoring, she has directly empowered more than 200 rural women and motivated many small and marginal farmers to adopt improved packages of practices for sustainable livelihood security. Her farm now serves as a local model of progressive agriculture and women-led agri-entrepreneurship



[Source: Sumitra Meena (AICRP-WiA, MPUAT, Udaipur) & C.M. Balai (KVK, Dungarpur, Rajasthan)]

14. Progressive Farmer to Agri-Entrepreneur: Rural Transformation Story from Karnataka

Personal Profile

Name : Mangala Kiran Neelagund
Age : 43 years
Education : B.Sc. (Agriculture)
Mobile No : 8971407241
Address : W/o : Kiran Neelagund, Shree
Annapurneshwari Food products, Mulagund
village, Gadag-582117, Karnataka



Background

Mrs. Mangala transformed conventional farming into a sustainable and profitable enterprise using scientific knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship. Her education in agriculture enabled her to adopt improved technologies and diversify across crops, livestock, agro-forestry and processing. Her integrated approach has enhanced productivity and income generated local employment and inspired rural women to take up agri-entrepreneurship. Thus non agri -business family turns to agri-business venture. Initial stage family support was meager but now she has proved agriculture as a profitable business.

Catalyst of Change

The key driver of her success has been sustained institutional and technical support from AICRP–Women in Agriculture, UAS, Dharwad, KRISHIK-ABI, UAS, Dharwad, ICAR-KVK Gadag, Department of Agriculture and Department of animal husbandry. Participation in various training programmes and exposure to different enterprise, sectors enabled her to adopt crop–livestock integration, indigenous technical knowledge and sustainable practices such as balanced feed preparation, animal disease management, rainwater harvesting, composting, silage making and post-harvest processing activities.

She learnt sheep rearing techniques, vaccination and started her own innovation in preparing home remedies for animals with help of veterinary doctors.

Access to agro-processing facilities and market-oriented enterprises enabled her to diversify and scale up her income, while her role as a master trainer significantly expanded her outreach and impact among farming communities. She also motivated women’s groups to promote the practice of gifting seedlings during household ceremonies and encouraged schoolchildren to plant saplings in their



Highlights

- » Successful farmer, entrepreneur and community leader
- » Adopted improved practices and diversify across crops, livestock, agro-forestry and processing
- » Annual income: about Rs 22.25 Lakh
- » Master trainer and role model for rural women

schools as well as at home, fostering environmental awareness and community participation.

Pathway to Progress

- » She practices cultivation of local variety of food grains, prepares balanced livestock feed and developed indigenous methods to control diseases like bluetongue and lumpy skin diseases for sheep.
- » She has constructed rainwater harvesting structures, compost units, vermi-compost units and silage pits for resource recycling and climate

resilience. She has also diversified into value-added products like masala chilli powder, desi ghee, turmeric powder, masala buttermilk, paneer, animal feed (livestock, goat/sheep and poultry).

- » She prepares cow dung cakes which have huge demand in cities for ritual purposes.
- » Smt. Mangala has trained over 3,500 farmers and farm women, prepared 600–700 saplings annually and promoted tree plantation in schools and colleges. She has created her own brand, Annpurneshwari for her products.
- » Established SHG named as “Unnati Mahila Sangh” and trained them in different sectors like food, tailoring and animal sector, based on their interest.
- » Her products reached within Karnataka state as well as outside the state (Andra Pradesh, Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana) and even reached to U.S.A, Australia, Dubai, London.
- » Her diversified enterprises including IFS generate significant annual income: approximately Rs. 22.25 Lakh

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognitions

Mangala Kiran Neelagund has received several prestigious state and national awards, including

- » Millionaire Farmer Award by Krishi Jagran and Mahindra Tractors (awarded by Shree Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways)
- » Shresta Krishi Mahila Award from UAS Dharwad
- » Krishi Pandit Award–2023 from the Government of Karnataka
- » Best Women Farmer and Best Entrepreneur Awards from ICAR-KVK, Gadag
- » Bhoo Tapasvini award from news first channel (Awarded by Shree Chaluvarya Swamy, Minister of Agriculture of Karnataka) and many local institutions awarded and praised her dedication and zeal.

Mangala Neelagund exemplifies innovation, resilience and women-led agricultural transformation, inspiring farmers and entrepreneurs to adopt sustainable and profitable practices.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Mangala Kiran Neelagund has significantly influenced farmers by demonstrating the success of integrated and diversified farming systems. Through hands-on training and field demonstrations, she has guided over 3,500 farmers and farm women to adopt sustainable practices like composting, silage making, balanced feed preparation, and rainwater harvesting. Her emphasis on indigenous seeds, local breeds, and low-cost disease management has helped farmers reduce input costs and risks. As a master trainer and role model, she has inspired many women to take up agri-entrepreneurship. She promoted collective action through SHGs, encouraging value addition and branding of farm products. Her efforts have shifted farmers from subsistence farming towards profitable, market-oriented agriculture.



[Source: Surekha Sankangoudar, (AICRP-WiA, Dharwad)]

15. Value Addition of Non-Timber Forest Produce for Livelihood in Himachal Pradesh

Profile

Name	: Leela Dhiman
Age	: 44 years
Education	: 12th standard
Mobile No	: 7876053196
Address	: Vill. Dul, Joginder Nagar, District Mandi HP
Enterprise	: Prerna Self Help Group
Landholding	: 6 bigha
Enterprise Type	: Value addition of Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), food processing, SHG-based enterprise
Crops grown	: Rice, maize, vegetables, kodra
Livestock	: one cow



Background

Mrs. Leela Devi is a progressive farm woman engaged in the cultivation of paddy, maize, vegetables, onion, and garlic. The COVID-19 pandemic severely affected her family when her husband lost his job, leaving the household without a stable source of income. Despite the crisis, she displayed resilience by utilizing her traditional knowledge of indigenous products to initiate a small-scale homemade pickle enterprise. However, limited technical knowledge, lack of standardization, and restricted market access constrained the growth of her initiative.

Catalyst of Change

During a field visit, the ICAR-AICRP on Women in Agriculture, CSKHPKV, Palampur identified her with entrepreneurial potential and encouraged her to explore value addition of non-timber forest produce (NTFP). She received hands-on training in product development, hygienic processing, packaging, labeling, and marketing. Continuous mentoring and technical support strengthened her skills and confidence, enabling her to transform a household activity into a structured, market-oriented enterprise.

Pathway to Progress

With institutional guidance and strong leadership, she mobilized eight women from her community to form the 'Prerna' Self Help Group (SHG). She motivated members to engage in collection and



Highlights

- » Diversified income sources through value addition of NTFP (kachnar, anjir, simbal, kardi, chhota amla-burfi & candy & powder)
- » Encouraging women to cultivate non-timber forest plants in their homestead
- » Annual income: Rs. 6.50 Lakh
- » Role model for rural women

primary processing of non-timber forest produce, fostering entrepreneurship and collective action. Over time, her initiative has grown significantly, with 20-25 women actively participating in procurement of these valuable resources thereby strengthening livelihoods at the community level.

The SHG diversified into the production of pickles, jams, chutneys, preserves, amla burfi, amla powder, and other value-added products with unique selling properties. Responding to emerging market trends, the group further ventured into millet-based bakery and confectionery products, addressing the growing demand for nutritious and traditional foods. To ensure

sustainability, women were encouraged to cultivate non-timber forest plants, ensuring a steady supply of raw materials.

Productivity & Income Enhancement:

- » Annual net profit: Rs. 6.50 Lakh
- » Diversified income sources through NTFP value addition (kachnar, anjir, simbal, kardi, chhota amla-burfi & candy & powder)
- » Employment generation for rural women
- » Strengthened food security and livelihood resilience

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Leela Devi has emerged as a strong leader and role model for women's economic empowerment. Her enterprise has gained recognition at local fairs, state-level exhibitions in Shimla, and the Saras Mela, Delhi, where her products received excellent market response. She has received several awards and accolades for her entrepreneurial achievements. Her journey exemplifies how resilience, indigenous knowledge, institutional support, and collective action can lead to sustainable livelihoods and economic independence for rural women.



Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Leela Devi has positively influenced other farmers by demonstrating the benefits of value addition to non-timber forest produce. Her success motivated many rural women and farmers to adopt food processing and entrepreneurial activities. She encouraged farmers to diversify their income sources by cultivating forest-based plants and traditional crops. Through the Self Help Group, she promoted collective farming and marketing practices. Her initiative generated employment opportunities and improved livelihood security in the village. Farmers also learned improved processing, packaging, and marketing techniques from her example. Overall, she became a role model, inspiring others to adopt innovative and sustainable farming practices.



[Source: Ranjana Verma, Bindia Dutt, Raj Pathania, Neena Vyas and Sapna Gautam (AICRP-WiA, CSKHPKV, Palampur)]

16. Zaika- The Culinary Journey

Profile

Name : Anita Goyal
Age : 59 years
Education : B.A.
Mobile No : 9256095900
Address : Village Agwarladhai, Ludhiana, Punjab
Enterprise : Zaika Products (Fruits and vegetable preservation and processing)



Background

Mrs. Anita Goyal's journey towards success began with a crisis that changed her thought process about women's role in the society. After enjoying a stable married life since 1978, disaster struck when a fire ravaged her home, wiping out almost all household assets. With limited resources and mounting responsibilities, she suddenly faced with the daunting task of rebuilding her family's life from scratch, an adversity that ignited her determination to seek financial independence through her culinary skills.

Catalyst of Change

With unwavering courage and strong determination, she began her journey from her modest kitchen. Starting a small training centre with just three students, she earned Rs. 700/- only, an amount that symbolised hope rather than income. What began as a simple attempt to rebuild her life soon evolved into 'Zaika Cooking Class' a venture that not only highlighted her culinary expertise but also became a platform for empowering others to discover their potential through cooking. Both formal and informal training played a pivotal role in shaping her entrepreneurial journey. Mrs. Goyal honed her skills through multiple capacity-building programmes conducted by ICAR-CIPHET, Ludhiana, KVK, Ludhiana at samrala and Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana which strengthened her technical knowledge and confidence in the production and marketing of value-added food products.

Pathway to Progress

Today, Zaika boasts a diverse range of homemade healthy products, including traditional and fusion spice blends; amla-based products such as candy and mouth fresheners; nutritious pinnis (alsi and chana) fruit pickles made from mango, lemon and red and green chillies; herbal drinks and masalas;



Highlights

- » Diverse value-added food product
- » Annual income: Around Rs. 6.0 Lakh
- » Awarded at many state and national-level platforms
- » A resource person and strong role model for potential women entrepreneurs

reach customers in other states through courier services.

- » Net Annual income: around Rs. 6.0 Lakh
- » Handling over 20 orders daily.
- » Plans to establish a food processing unit worth Rs. 15 Lakh.
- » Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition
- » Best Woman Entrepreneur awards by Honourable Chief Minister Punjab at Kisan Mela, PAU, Ludhiana
- » First prize for stall layout at Rashtriya Sehkar Masala, Jaipur
- » Best Entrepreneur for homemade masalas at the organic food festival.
- » Showcased her products at an exhibition organised at ICAR–CIWA, Bhubaneswar

ready-to-cook meal kits and dehydrated fruits and vegetables. Her journey gradually moved from home-based sales to stalls at local fairs and exhibitions. With enrolment under MSME and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Zaika gained both credibility and momentum.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » At present, Zaika food products are marketed across Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan and

Influence on Other Women Farmers

All through her journey, her family stood firmly by her side. When limited mobility and digital skills posed challenges, her son, daughter and daughter-in-law supported her with transportation, marketing and social media outreach. Reflecting on her journey, she firmly believes, *'No work is small or big if you truly want to make a change, all you need is dedication and the willpower to move forward'*. Her dream, nurtured through Zaika's steady growth, has gone beyond personal success. Today, it empowers the next generation and opens doors for women in the community. Through cooking courses, food processing trainings and exhibitions, many women and youth are gaining practical skills transforming livelihoods and fostering self-reliance.



[Source: Ritu Mittal Gupta, Renuka Agrawal and Neerja Singla (AICRP-WiA, PAU, Ludhiana)]

17. Nurturing Health and Livelihoods through an Integrated Approach

Profile

Name : Veerpal Kaur
Age : 50 years
Education : M.A. (Punjabi)
Mobile No : 9464675944
Address : Village Ramana Albel, Faridkot, Punjab
Enterprise : B-Basket (Agro- Processing and Dairy-Based Products)



Background

In the scenario of social resistance and limited resources, the journey of Mrs Veerpal Kaur began with challenges than an opportunity. Determined to safeguard the health and future of her family and community, she took a decision to step into farming despite criticism from her family members. With no assurance of success and limited land piece of 1.5 to 3 acres at her disposal, she started cultivating crops in 2015. It was a small act of resilience with diversification in farming and grew chickpeas, barley, flaxseed, maize, sorghum and pearl millet primarily for family consumption.

Catalyst of Change

A significant turning point came with the technical guidance of ICAR-AICRP on Women in Agriculture Centre at PAU, Ludhiana where she got the technical guidance and continued support in developing multi-grain flour using scientifically appropriate processing methods and quality standards. Building on this expertise, Mrs. Kaur diversified into millet processing, working with ragi, kangni and green kangni to create value-added products such as flour, porridge (dalia), sattu, biscuits and burfi and also adopted the integrated farming system to multiply her income.

Pathway to Progress

Alongside organic farming, she also ventured into dairy farming. Starting with 7-8 desi cows, she used the milk for household needs and supplied the surplus to the local dairy. Today, she owns 15 high-yielding desi cows, with dairy farming, forming a vital pillar of her livelihood. Her entrepreneurial skills were further strengthened through participation in several training programmes at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana where she learned the preparation of papad, pickles and murabba enhancing her



Highlights

- » Converted challenge into opportunity
- » Adopted integrated farming system
- » Promoting organic farming and healthy food products
- » Annual income: around Rs. 6.0 Lakh
- » State-level recognition

capabilities in food processing and value addition.

Productivity & Income Enhancement:

- » She is regularly exhibiting her products at Kisan Melas and Saras Melas, steadily building her market presence.
- » Earns nearly Rs. 50,000 per month and have the feeling of economic independence.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

With an extraordinary respect in the family, her achievements were well acknowledged with a State Award by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri Bhagwant Singh Mann, during a Kisan Mela, an honour that strengthened her motivation to continue work with renewed enthusiasm.

- » In January 2022, the Central Ministry of Food Processing invited her to showcase her products at the Organic Food Festival in New Delhi.

Influence on Other Farmers

The journey of Mrs. Veerpal Kaur is an example showing how hard work done with a noble goal can transform challenges into opportunities. Her endeavour has helped not only the health of her family but of the community around her who have become more observant and aware of having nutritious food. She has been an inspiration for many women in her village, who have chosen to take up organic farming and agro-processing as an enterprise. She has also emerged as a respected role model for women entrepreneurs in agriculture.



[Source: Renuka Aggarwal (AICRP-WiA, PAU, Ludhiana)]

18. Nutri-Enterprise: Journey of Self-Reliance

Name : Seema Rani
Age : 51 years
Education : Post graduate
Mobile No. : 9568366330
Address : Gadarpur,
U.S.Nagar, Uttarakhand



Background

Mrs. Seema Rani comes from a rural background where income opportunities for women were largely confined to low-return informal activities. Despite possessing rich traditional culinary knowledge, she faced limited income sources and economic dependence, along with underutilization of her food preparation skills. Access to formal employment was particularly constrained, especially during middle age, and the household depended heavily on market-purchased processed foods of questionable nutritional quality. Recognizing the increasing demand for healthy, homemade, and chemical-free foods, Smt. Seema identified an opportunity to transform her traditional knowledge into a sustainable livelihood option.

Catalyst of Change

The transformation began with the effective utilization of traditional food processing knowledge passed down through generations. Smt. Seema relied on locally available agricultural produce, sourced from nearby farmers. The home-based nature of processing required minimal investment, making the enterprise feasible and sustainable. Critical institutional and financial support was provided through the Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) named *Samridhi*, which comprises 550 women members. Technical guidance, skill enhancement, and entrepreneurial support from ICAR-AICRP on WiA Centre, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kashipur strengthened product standardization, quality control, and processing practices. Financial and organizational support from NCCDC, Dehradun further facilitated scaling up, procurement of basic equipment, packaging improvement, and collective marketing. Informal market linkages with local consumers and nearby markets supported early sales, while growing consumer awareness regarding nutrition, food quality, and traditional foods further strengthened the demand for her products amongst the consumers.



Highlights

- » Converted traditional food preparation skills into a successful home-based nutri-enterprise
- » Produces value-added products like multigrain atta, desi ghee, and homemade bakery products
- » Earns about Rs 7.0 Lakh annually, improving household livelihood security of women of Self Help Group
- » Acts as a role model for rural women through entrepreneurship and leadership
- » CEO of Samridhi FPO

Pathway to Progress

Seema introduced a diversified range of nutritious, value-added food products rooted in traditional practices. Her multigrain atta is prepared from carefully selected and locally available grains that are cleaned and processed to retain the nutritional quality and support the balanced diets. Desi ghee is another produce which is very popular among the locals, produced through traditional churning of butter, preserving its authentic aroma, taste, and health benefits. Homemade cookies and biscuits are prepared using local ingredients and traditional recipes. Turmeric powder is sourced from local farmers and processed through cleaning, drying, grinding, and packing without chemical treatments, ensuring purity and high curcumin content. Amla chutney is another her popular products, prepared using traditional

formulations and natural spices, offering high nutritional value with rich vitamin C and antioxidant content. The Collective processing, shared learning, and aggregation of produce through the *Samridhi FPO* have enabled standardization, bulk production, and improved market reach.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The enterprise generates regular supplementary household income of approximately Rs. 7.0 Lakh per year. Value addition has enhanced the economic worth of raw agricultural produce, while production costs remain low due to local sourcing and home-based processing. Through the FPO platform, procurement efficiencies and marketing have improved profitability and reduced the risk.

The enterprise has created self-employment for her and contributes to income generation for many other women associated with her FPO. Overall, it has strengthened livelihood stability, financial independence, and household resilience.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Through her enterprise, Mrs. Seema Rani has achieved increased economic independence and self-confidence. Her role in household decision-making has strengthened, and she has gained recognition as a trusted local producer of healthy, homemade food products. She serves as a role model for rural women—particularly those in middle age—by demonstrating the potential of traditional knowledge-based enterprises. Her leadership within the *Samridhi FPO* has enhanced collective confidence among women members and promoted entrepreneurship, nutritional awareness, and self-reliance.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Seema Rani's initiative encourages other women to adopt home-based food processing enterprises by showcasing the viability of low-cost, small-scale agri-food businesses supported through collective platforms like FPOs. Her enterprise supports local farmers through consistent sourcing of raw materials and promotes traditional, nutritious, and chemical-free foods. With institutional backing from ICAR-AICRP on WiA, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, KVK Kashipur, and NCDC Dehradun, the model demonstrates how household skills can be successfully linked with income generation, women's empowerment, and sustainable rural livelihoods.



[Source: Manisha Gahlot, Deepa Vinay, Seema Kwatra and Anil Kumar (AICRP-WiA, GBPUA&T, Pantnagar)]

19. Coarse Cereals to Commercial Success

Profile

Name : G. Sarojini
Age : 42 years
Education : B.Ed. Higher Secondary School
Teacher (Art and Craft, 12 years)
Mobile No : 7200033877
Address : Madurai, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise : Millet-Based Value-Added Products
and Bakery Product (>75 products)
Brand name : Mappillai Selvathaniyam Foods and Snacks



Background

COVID has caused numerous job losses around the world. Smt. Sarojini's case was no exception to this. The sudden loss of her position as an art & craft teacher not only caused financial insecurity but also significantly affected her ability to meet the educational expenses of her children pursuing higher studies. As a single parent residing in a rural area, she faced multiple challenges, including limited access to stable employment opportunities, entrepreneurial ecosystems and institutional resources.

Catalyst of change

In 2021, Sarojini participated in an online entrepreneurship training programme, which sparked her interest in millet-based food products. She considered it as a viable and sustainable business opportunity. The program equipped her with essential knowledge related to product development, emerging market trends, and fundamental entrepreneurial practices. Building on this foundation, she later attended a Skill Development Programme titled "The Art of Baking Tech: From Tradition to Innovation" in 2024, organized by the All India Coordinated Research Project on Women in Agriculture (AICRP-WiA) at Community Science College and Research Institute (TNAU), Madurai, Tamil Nadu. This program offered hands-on exposure to baking techniques, product branding, and business management aspects, including awareness of regulatory certifications such as FSSAI, AGMARK, and MSME.

Pathway to Progress

In her initial attempt to transition into an entrepreneur, her progress was hindered by her dependence on conventional food production methods and the absence of formal business experience, particularly in areas such as marketing strategies, product packaging, regulatory compliance, and legal formalities. Although she initiated a venture centered on millet-based snack products, the lack of technical guidance and institutional support remained as a significant constraint on the scaling and



Highlights

- » Wide and diversified portfolio of millet-based products.
- » Utilized digital platforms for online promotion and sales
- » Sustainable utilization of traditional crops such as millets, contributed to improved nutritional outcomes and enhanced food security

commercial sustainability of her products. Institutional support from organizations such as the ICAR-AICRP-WiA enabled her to access valuable resources, including mentorship, networking platforms, and market linkage opportunities. This comprehensive support strengthened Sarojini's technical capabilities, allowing her to diversify her product range and expand her enterprise.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Sarojini introduced a series of innovations into her enterprise:

- » She developed a wide and diversified portfolio of millet-based products.
- » She effectively utilized digital platforms for online promotion and sales
- » The implementation of best practices in packaging and labeling enhanced the visibility of her product and consumer confidence.
- » The Sustainable utilization of traditional crops such as millets, contributed to improved nutritional outcomes and enhanced food security
- » Through this venture she is earning net Annual income – Rs. 4.40 Lakhs

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her transformative impact has been formally recognized with the "Women Icon Award 2024" by Women's World Records & Awards International, celebrating her journey from job loss to entrepreneurial success.

- » She gained confidence, leadership skills, and independent decision-making ability and achieved social recognition as a successful millet-based entrepreneur.
- » Through her experience, she inspired other rural women to adopt millet value addition for livelihood security.
- » This enhanced her self-respect and status within family and community.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Sarojini's entrepreneurial journey has gone beyond economic success. She has become a mentor and role model for women, particularly those from financially underprivileged backgrounds. Through her position as a Master Trainer in government schemes like 'Vaalnthu Kaatuvom Thittam', she trains fisher women from Rameshwaram and farm women on entrepreneurship skills, creating a ripple effect of empowerment. Her guidance and training have motivated countless women to break free from social constraints and pursue self-sufficiency through entrepreneurship.



20. Value Addition Driving Sustainable Livelihoods

Profile

Name : Rajni
Age : 43 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 7876536768
Address : Village Chhater, PO Bhuana, Panchrukhi-176103
Teh. Palampur, District Kangra, HP



Background

Mrs. Rajni is a progressive farm woman engaged in diversified farming and household-level processing activities. Along with cultivating cereals and vegetables, she prepared traditional value-added products like pickles, chutneys from indigenous seasonal produce and handcrafted soaps. Despite her initiative, she faced major challenges related to product quality, shelf stability, packaging, labeling, and market access, which restricted enterprise expansion and income growth. She aspired to strengthen her livelihood, support her family, and gain social recognition but constrained technical and marketing literacy.

Catalyst of Change

Her leadership potential was identified during a capacity-building training on food processing and value addition conducted by ICAR-AICRP-Women in Agriculture (WiA) Centre at CSKHPKV, Palampur. Through systematic hands-on training and mentoring, she received technical guidance on processing, quality improvement, packaging, labeling, and enterprise management. The AICRP-WiA team also encouraged her farm diversification and market-oriented production, laying the foundation for sustainable entrepreneurship.

Pathway to Progress

With institutional support, Smt. Rajni diversified her farm by introducing high-value cash crops such as big cardamom and cultivating medicinal plants including ashwagandha, aloe vera, tulsi, wild marigold, and chamomile. She innovatively integrated medicinal plant extracts into soap production, significantly enhancing product quality, uniqueness, and market appeal. Improved value-addition techniques and strategic branding strengthened her enterprise. Her products are marketed through



Highlights

- » Successful entrepreneur and community leader
- » Introduced high-value cash crops such as big cardamom and cultivating medicinal plants - ashwagandha, aloe vera, tulsi, wild marigold, and chamomile
- » Innovatively integrated medicinal plant extracts into soap production
- » Annual income: about Rs 15.50 Lakh
- » Role model for women-led entrepreneurship

exhibitions, fairs, B2B platforms, and customized orders, enabling wider outreach and consistent demand.

Productivity & Income Enhancement:

- » Annual Income: Rs.15.50 Lakh
- » Diversified income from farming and processing
- » Improved shelf life, quality, and market value of products
- » Reduction in post-harvest losses and enhanced value realization

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a successful entrepreneur and community leader. She actively organizes and motivates farm women, enabling them to adopt value-addition activities and achieve financial independence. Her enhanced decision-making role, social recognition, and leadership within the community position her as a role model for women innovators in agri-food systems. Her journey highlights how skill development, innovation, and institutional support can transform individual livelihoods and uplift rural communities

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Rajni has inspired nearby farmers to adopt diversified and value-added farming practices. Her success encouraged farmers to shift from subsistence crops to high-value cash crops. Many women farmers learned processing, packaging, and branding by observing her enterprise. She motivates SHG members to start small agri-processing units for additional income. Farmers now show greater interest in cultivating medicinal and aromatic plants. Her leadership improved confidence among rural women to take entrepreneurial risks. She shares practical knowledge through trainings, meetings, and field interactions. Overall, her journey strengthened collective growth and innovation in the farming community.



[Source: Ranjana Verma, Bindia Dutt, Raj Pathania, Neena Vyas and Sapna Gautam (AICRP-WIA, CSKHPKV, Palampur)]

21. Entrepreneurship through Agro-processing: A Success Story from Punjab

Profile

Name : Jagwinder Kaur
Age : 47 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 9815257732
Address : Village Lakhowal, Ludhiana, Punjab
Enterprise : UPJ Farm Products
(Agro Processing and Value
Addition of food Products)



Background

The journey of Mrs. Jagwinder Kaur started during the trying period of COVID pandemic. Those were tough times and the uncertainty surrounding it resulted in a huge financial strain on her family especially for children's education. She rose to the situation to embrace the challenge and decided to support the farming income of her husband with her own endeavour.

Catalyst of Change

Associated with Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana since 2006, she has consistently demonstrated a strong drive to achieve purposeful goals in life. A major impetus came from ICAR-AICRP on WiA Centre Team at PAU, who motivated her to establish her own enterprise. With renewed determination, she opened an outlet in her village for value addition of farm produce through primary and secondary processing and used her outlet to sell her food products.

Pathway to Progress

Presently, she manages a well-established agro-processing unit equipped with a flour mill, rice mill and oil expeller. Along with her family members, she is participating in multiple training programmes at PAU in agro-processing, food technology, bakery, dairy and the preparation of pickles, jams and murabbas. She is producing multi-grain flour, bakery and millet-based products. Looking ahead, she plans to undertake specialized training in gluten-free flour preparation, enabling her to produce and



Highlights

- » Converted challenge into opportunity.
- » Promoting healthy foods
- » Annual income: around Rs 6.30 Lakh
- » Recognition at state level
- » Role model for rural women

market high-value products while further scaling her business.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

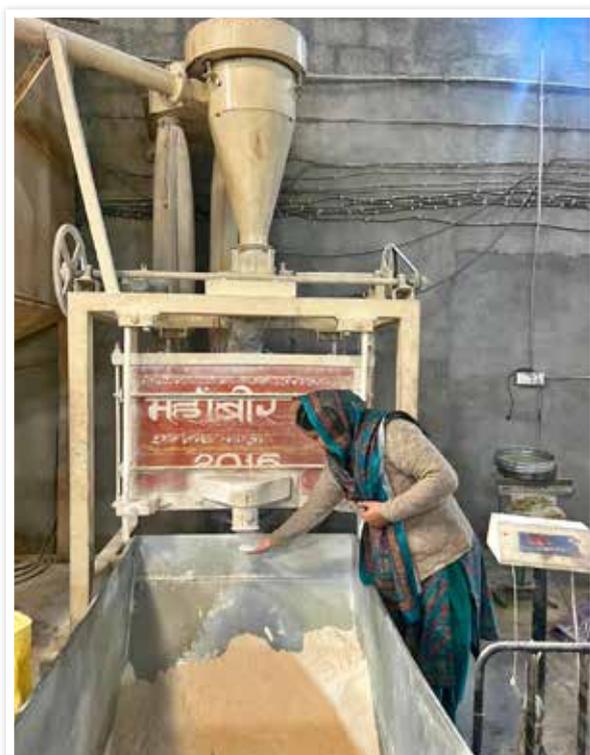
- » Annual income from APC: around Rs 4.50 Lakh
- » Expanding her enterprise further, she has recently ventured into bakery products, particularly dry cakes, generating an additional monthly income of approximately Rs. 15,000.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » She is an active member of the Kisan Club at PAU, Ludhiana where she has served as Vice President for the past six years, contributing to farmer-led initiatives and community engagement.
- » Organizes Annual function of Kisan Club every year where she gives opportunity to other entrepreneurs to display and sale their products.

Influence on Other Farmers

She is a role model for women of her village and nearby villages who come to visit her outlet and get motivated by seeing her success. Through her experiences, she hopes to inspire more women in her community to step forward with confidence, acquire new skills, and carve their own path to financial independence. She firmly believes that when women support one another, it is easier for communities to grow stronger, thrive collectively and prosper sustainably.



[Source: Prerna Kapila (AICRP-WiA, PAU, Ludhiana)]

22. Millet Processing to Prosperity: A Case of Tamil Nadu

Profile:

Name : P. Hema
Age : 35 years
Education : B.Sc. (Microbiology)
Mobile No : 9003213233
Village/District/State : Theni District, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise : Millet and fruit based value added products (Brand: Vahin Food Products)



Background

Mrs. P. Hema, a 35-year-old homemaker wished to support her family financially while balancing her household responsibilities. Though she possessed educational qualifications and strong culinary skills, she faced several constraints such as lack of initial capital, limited exposure to markets, inadequate branding knowledge, and minimal confidence to step into entrepreneurship. At the same time, the increasing demand for healthy and traditional millet foods created an opportunity for her to start a small enterprise.

Catalyst of change

A major change in Mrs. Hema's entrepreneurial journey came when she received financial assistance under Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) through District Industries Centre (DIC), Theni. This support enabled her to invest in baking tools, processing equipments which led the pathway to increase her production efficiency without any compromise in product quality. Her entrepreneurial journey moved forward significantly after undergoing training programme organized by CENDECT-KVK, the State Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology (2023), and Agricultural Engineering College & Research Institute (AEC&RI), TNAU, Coimbatore in which she gained knowledge on millet processing, product standardization, value addition, food safety regulations, hygiene practices, and quality control measures. She also attended Skill Development Programme under the title "The Art of Baking Tech: From Tradition to Innovation" under the ICAR-All India Coordinated Research Project on Women in Agriculture (AICRP-WiA), organized by the Community Science College and Research Institute, Madurai which brought a deep knowledge over modern baking methods, ways for attractive packaging and branding, food safety standards, certificate requirements



Highlights

- » Mrs. P. Hema from Tamil Nadu is a successful millet entrepreneur.
- » She started her business from her home kitchen and established Vahin Food Products.
- » With support from PMEGP scheme and skill training, she expanded her production.
- » Her annual income is around ₹5 lakhs.
- » She provides employment and training to rural women.
- » Awarded Best Entrepreneur Award 2024.

and the importance and usage of digital marketing. This helped her to reach customers beyond her local area.

Pathway to Progress

Hema began experimenting with millet-based recipes in her home kitchen using locally available raw materials. As a first step she prepared and supplied her products to 20 shops in Chennai and Theni. Encouraged by positive feedback from neighbours and self-help group members, she formally launched her enterprise under the brand name 'Vahin Homemade Food Products' in 2021 at Theni. Through her participation in several training and skill development programmes, she strengthened her technical and managerial competencies which played a pivotal role in expanding her enterprise. She actively participated in exhibitions, farmer's fair, which helped her to gain visibility and build customer trust.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Her average net annual income is about Net Annual income –Rs. 5.0 Lakhs
- » In addition to the local area, she is also marketing her food products through online platforms and institutional outlets such as the Theni Collectorate canteen.
- » The monthly income generated from her millet-based products has significantly contributed to meet her household expenses, children's education, and savings.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Best Entrepreneur Award 2024, presented by the Honourable Governor of Tamil Nadu
- » First Prize in the Cooking Competition conducted by the Department of Consumer Goods Supply and Consumer Protection, Theni (2023)
- » Gained confidence, decision-making power within her family, and recognition in the community.
- » Her transition from a homemaker to a successful entrepreneur highlights the importance of skill development, institutional support, and the immense potential of traditional foods in modern markets.



Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. P. Hema's interesting entrepreneurial journey showed that millet-based business serves as a powerful tool for women's empowerment, nutritional security, and sustainable rural livelihoods. Importantly, she now provides employment opportunities to other rural women, multiplying the impact of her success. Her transition from a homemaker to a successful entrepreneur proves that when women are empowered, the whole community prospers.



[Source: S. Arokiamary and R. Vijayalakshmi (AICRP-WiA, TNAU, Madurai) & M. Ramya Siva Selvi and P. Maheswaran (KVK, Theni, Tamil Nadu)]

23. Backyard to Business: Story of Entrepreneurship from Terai Region of Uttarakhand

Profile

Name : Balavindar Kaur
Age : 47 years
Education : 8th standard
Address : Chitranjanpur- I, P.O. Kali Nagar, Tehsil Rudrapur, District U.S. Nagar, Uttarakhand
Mobile No : 7455834299
Enterprise : Poultry Farming
Institutional Affiliation : Member, Anmol Self Help Group



Background

Mrs. Balavindar Kaur belongs to a rural household where agriculture and animal rearing were traditionally practiced mainly for subsistence. The family had limited and irregular sources of income, as productivity remained low due to traditional rearing practices and lack of scientific knowledge. A major change occurred in 2018, when Mrs. Balavindar Kaur associated with a small group of women (Anmol Self Help Group) under a livelihood initiative supported by Hindustan Zinc Limited. Through this programme, she received technical training, exposure and handholding support in scientific poultry management. As part of this initiative, Mrs. Balavindar started her first poultry unit with 500 broilers in a kaccha poultry shed. With improved management practices related to feeding, hygiene and vaccination. She earned a profit of about ₹11,000 in the first cycle. This initial success boosted her confidence and motivation. Encouraged by the positive results, she expanded her enterprise to 1000 broiler and upgraded to a pakka poultry shed, further improving productivity and income stability. She was supported by ICAR-AICRP on WiA Center and participated in the trainings at GBPUAT, Pantnagar in 2023 where she received advanced training in poultry management. This exposure helped her gain deeper knowledge about commercial poultry farming, disease control, feed efficiency and market planning.

Catalyst of Change

She took part in regular trainings from time to time, which helped her learn all aspects of poultry management at GBPUAT, Pantnagar. These trainings became a catalyst for positive change in her journey of the poultry farming. Access to regular veterinary support from GBPUAT Pantnagar and



Highlights

- » Started poultry farming with 500 broilers, expanded to 1,000+ birds using scientific practices
- » Adopted improved housing, balanced feeding, vaccination, and disease management
- » Generates ~₹7.1 lakh per cycle (45 days)
- » Emerged as a confident SHG-based entrepreneur and role model for rural women
- » Adoption of scientific broiler rearing practices
- » Proper housing, hygiene and vaccination schedule
- » Balanced feeding and regular health monitoring
- » Market-oriented production planning

timely technical guidance and mentoring by AICRP-WiA centre further strengthened her practices. Trainings on vaccination schedules, balanced feeding, proper hygiene, scientific housing and disease prevention helped reduce mortality, improve health and increase productivity. As a result, her poultry enterprise became more profitable. Pathway to Progress

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Poultry farming: 3,000 broilers reared in 45 days; Average weight per bird: 2.5kg
- » Total live weight: 7,500kg; Market price: ₹95/kg
- » Gross income: ₹7.125 Lakhs per cycle (45 days)

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a confident rural entrepreneur and a role model for other women in her village. She actively participates in decision-making related to

her poultry unit. Her success has earned the recognition and respect within her family and community. She guides and motivates other SHG members to adopt poultry enterprises, contributing to collective empowerment, family nutrition and livelihood enhancement.

Influence on Other Farmers

The visible success of Mrs. Balvinder has encouraged several women farmers to adopt poultry in the area. She shares her experiences, management practices and marketing strategies with fellow SHG members and neighbors, thereby acting as a local change agent and promoter of sustainable rural livelihoods.



24. Rise to Recognition through Organic Farming and Processing

Profile

Name : Anju Kumari
Age : 32 years
Education : Post Graduate (Home Science)
Mobile No : 9934281159
Address : W/o, Shri Naresh Rai, At- Oriyama, P.O- Bambaiya Harlal, Dalsinghsarai, Samastipur, Bihar (848114)



Background

Mrs. Anju Kumari is an active farm woman from Samastipur district of Bihar. Starting life in a small hut, she has now built her own home and contributed to her family's finances by farming on just 2.5 acres of land. Being a post graduate, she has become an inspiring example of practicing successful organic farming. She has a strong interest in millet and mushroom cultivation, along with their processing. In addition, the cultivation of spices such as turmeric and coriander is a major source of her income. Igniting a chemical-free food production, she has been leading the organic farming movement in the state. Though the road to fame was not easy for her, with grit and perseverance, she transformed her life and also made an exemplary identity in organic production and value-added products.

Catalyst of Change

She diversified from staple crops and chose millets, mushrooms, banana and papaya instead. But it was oilseeds which gave her the breakthrough. She now cultivates mustard, sesame, linseed and niger (also called ramtil), processes them into oil, oil cakes, laddus, powders, and even beauty products. After participating capacity building programmes under ICAR-AICRP on Women in Agriculture organised by Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University, Pusa, Bihar, she develops expertise in millet processing and value addition activities and started producing and marketing of value-added products in local markets and Kisan Melas, boosting her family's income and inspiring other women to adopt self-reliance through agriculture and processing activities.

Pathway to Progress

Due to continuous hand holding in organic farming and millet processing, she focussed on food



Highlights

- » Mrs. Anju Kumari is an organic farmer from Bihar.
- » Practices millet, mushroom, and spice cultivation.
- » Produces value-added organic products.
- » Improved family income through farming & processing.
- » Inspires rural women towards self-reliance.
- » Message: Organic farming empowers women and improves livelihoods

processing and mushroom products. While earning a net annual income of Rs 4.80 Lakh.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » She was invited by Hon'ble President of India on Independence Day.
- » She was honoured by President of India.
- » Imparts training and motivation to farmers for organic farming.
- » She was awarded as "Millionaire Farmer of India" (MFOI) in 2025 by Krishi Jagran.

Influence on other farmers

Using cow dung manure, neem cake and natural techniques, she not only ensured the fertility of the land but also encouraged other farmers in the village to adopt the same practices. Her success motivates rural women and farmers to adopt organic farming, millets production and food processing. She is a strong motivator for SHGs and mentoring to other women for opting the agripreneurship.



[Source: Gitanjali Chaudhary, Neelam Kumari, Savita Kumari and Sangeeta Deo (AICRP-WiA, RPCAU, Pusa)]

25. Ornamental Lotus Cultivation: Blooming Innovations

Profile

Name : Ajitha K.V
Age : 43 years
Education : B. Com
Mobile No : 8089725818
Address : Thiruvalla, Pathanamthitta District, Kerala
Enterprise : Ornamental Horticulture – Lotus Cultivation



Background

Mrs. Ajitha, an ornamental horticulture enthusiast from Kerala, saw an opportunity in lotus cultivation, India's National Flower. Despite its cultural significance, commercial cultivation was limited in Kerala due to lack of quality planting material, technical know-how, and location-specific practices. Women entrepreneurs faced constraints such as lack of scientific breeding knowledge, limited access to premium markets and inadequate institutional support. She turned her passion into a structured entrepreneurial venture, blending tradition and science.

Catalyst of Change

She received technical guidance and continuous mentoring from ICAR-KVK Pathanamthitta. Exposure to scientific lotus propagation techniques, hybridization methods and nursery management helped her transform traditional cultivation into a high value ornamental enterprise. Support from ICAR-ATARI Bengaluru and characterization by IHR Bengaluru strengthened the innovation.

Pathway to Progress

Her systematic approach to lotus cultivation led to the development of indigenous hybrids that thrive in small spaces. She used container-based cultivation, ensuring quality planting material and sustained flowering. Her hybrids, like Panineer Rose, offer ornamental beauty, fragrance, and ease of cultivation, making lotus cultivation feasible for home gardens and courtyards

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She has developed 15 indigenous lotus hybrids, including Mayoore, Marigold, Panineer Rose, and Vajra, which are commercially successful due to traits like early flowering and fragrance. She earns



HIGHLIGHTS

- » Developed 15 indigenous lotus hybrids with improved fragrance, colour and extended flowering duration
- » Introduced container-friendly lotus varieties suitable for ponds, tubs and small household spaces
- » Successfully established a high-value ornamental horticulture enterprise led by a woman entrepreneur
- » Achieved a steady monthly income exceeding ₹60,000 from sale of lotus plants and planting material
- » Premium varieties like Panineer Rose fetch ₹3,500–₹4,500 per plant, ensuring high profitability
- » Enterprise involves low recurring costs after establishment, resulting in favourable economic returns
- » Innovation has strong out-scaling potential through nurseries, home gardening and temple flower markets.

₹60,000+ monthly selling lotus plants, with premium varieties like Panineer Rose fetching ₹3,500–₹4,500 per plant. Low recurring costs make it a profitable livelihood option.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Through this innovation, she has emerged as a successful woman entrepreneur and role model in ornamental horticulture. Her enterprise has inspired many women and youths who are inclined to adopt container-based lotus cultivation. She actively shares knowledge and planting material, contributing to livelihood enhancement in the region.

Influence on other farmers

Ms. Ajitha's innovative lotus cultivation venture has inspired women, home gardeners, and smallholders in Pathanamthitta district to adopt ornamental lotus cultivation, promoting livelihood enhancement and entrepreneurship. Her success with container-friendly hybrids has encouraged diversification into high-value horticulture.



[Source: C.P Robert and Sindhu Sadanandan (KVK, Pathanamthitta, Kerala)]

26. Local Millets to Global Markets: The Inspiring Story of Value-addition from Kerala

Profile

Name : Ambika Somasundaran
Age : 55 years
Education : MSW
Mobile No : 9539731501
Address : Marottichal, Puthur Panchayat,
Thrissur District, Kerala
Enterprise : Kariat Dry Foods (Agri-processing)



Background

The hilly regions of Marottichal are rich in agricultural produce such as banana, jackfruit, millets, turmeric and vegetables. However, farmers, especially women, faced challenges such as lack of processing facilities, limited market access, low income realisation and minimal entrepreneurial opportunities. Despite growing consumer demand for healthy and millet-based foods, these opportunities remained largely untapped at the local level.

Catalyst of Change

She came in contact with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Thrissur and actively participated in various training programmes on food processing and value addition. She also gained exposure through exhibitions and interactions facilitated by KVK. Continuous technical guidance and capacity building enabled her to plan and establish a value-added food enterprise.

Pathway to Progress

A small-scale processing unit was established with processing equipment, mechanized packaging systems, pulverizers and capsule-making machines. The enterprise introduced innovative products such as millet-based steam cake powders enriched with jackfruit, ragi, banana, vegetables and moringa; curry powders; soup mixes; moringa rasam powder; herbal tea bags and moringa leaf capsules. Branding, quality assurance and online marketing enabled expansion to national and international markets. A Millet Café was also started to promote healthy food habits.



Highlights

- » Women-led Agripreneurship: Ambika Somasundaran's value-added food enterprise promotes local farm produce and inspires women entrepreneurs
- » Millet-based Products: Innovative products like millet-based steam cake powders, curry powders, and moringa leaf capsules cater to healthy food demand
- » Market Expansion: Branding, quality assurance, and online marketing enable national and international sales
- » Employment Generation: Direct employment to 12 persons, boosting livelihoods and nutrition security
- » Annual Turnover: ₹36 lakh annual turnover, improving income and market demand for local produce
- » Role Model: Her success inspires women to take up food processing and value addition enterprises
- » Farmer Linkages: Strengthened farmer linkages, promoting crop diversification and raw material supply

Productivity and Income Enhancement

The enterprise records an annual turnover of approximately Rs. 36 lakh. Value addition and diversification significantly improved income while creating steady market demand for local farm produce. The unit provides direct employment to 12 persons, including personnel engaged in marketing and sales.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The enterprise stands as a successful example of women-led agripreneurship in rural Kerala. She has emerged as a role model, inspiring other women to take up food processing and value addition enterprises. The initiative has strengthened farmer linkages, improved livelihoods and contributed to nutrition security.

Influence on Other Farmers

The success of 'Kariat Dry Foods' has encouraged farmers in the region to diversify crops and supply raw materials for value addition. It has also motivated aspiring women entrepreneurs to explore agri-food enterprises.



[Source: Smitha, K. P., Mary Regina F, Krishnaja U., Shimi G. J., Anju C., Ambili John and Aparna G.S. (KVK, Thrissur, Kerala)]

27. Small Beginning to Global Market: A Rural Enterprise Story from Karnataka

Profile

Name	: Annapurna Rachanna Sangolagi
Age	: 45 years
Education	: Pre-University Course (PUC)
Mobile No	: 9845762606
Address	: Plot no 12 Balaji Nagar, Old Jewargi Road, Kalaburagi-585102
Enterprise	: Value addition; Pulse and Millet-based Products



Background

Mrs. Annapurna belongs to an agricultural family and initially did not have an independent income source. Despite household responsibilities and limited initial capital, she aspired to become economically self-reliant. Lack of formal training and market exposure were initial challenges, but her traditional food knowledge and availability of local raw materials helped her take the first step towards entrepreneurship.

Catalyst of Change

Her strong determination to achieve financial independence acted as the key catalyst. She began by preparing groundnut chutney using household utensils and supplied one kilogram to a nearby shop. By actively collecting customer feedback and improving taste and quality, she gradually gained confidence. A major turning point came when she successfully fulfilled a bulk order of 25kg for a marriage function, which encouraged her to expand her enterprise.

Pathway to Progress

By saving small amounts from her profits, she invested in a pounding machine, increasing production efficiency. She diversified into traditional fried snacks such as chakli, laddu, kurkure, and other pulse- and millet-based products. Her ethical practice of not using reused cooking oil earned strong consumer trust. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she supplied food products to the police department, gaining wider recognition. She expanded her unit, generated employment for 13 women, and collaborated with SHGs involved in roti production, creating an inclusive and sustainable business model.



Highlights

- » From Home to Global: Smt. Annapurna's journey from household chores to international market
- » Overcame Challenges: Limited capital, no formal training, but strong determination drove her
- » Diversified Products: Groundnut chutney to traditional snacks, pulse- and millet-based products
- » Ethical Practices: No reused cooking oil, earned consumer trust
- » Employment Generator: Supports 13 women, collaborates with SHGs
- » Innovative Products: "Nuchu" sorghum-based product, refined with feedback
- » Awards & Recognition: Shri Shakti Award (2023), Savitri Bai Phule Award (2026)
- » Monthly Income: Rs. 1.0 lakh, stable and growing
- » Inspiring Others: Trains SHGs, entrepreneurs, and students, promoting traditional foods and women entrepreneurship

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Annapurna's journey motivates rural women and farmers to adopt value addition and food processing. She trains SHGs, aspiring entrepreneurs, and university students, and shares her expertise through radio talks and TV interviews, promoting traditional foods and women entrepreneurship.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

Currently, she produces about 150kg of food products per day, all of which are sold successfully. She innovated a traditional sorghum-based product called 'Nuchu', refining it based on consumer feedback. With technical guidance from ICAR- KVK Kalaburagi-1, her products were standardized, branded, and effectively marketed, enabling international market access. Her enterprise now earns a stable monthly income of approximately Rs. 1 lakh.

Social and Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has achieved financial independence, enhanced self-confidence, and social recognition. Her success has been formally acknowledged through prestigious awards such as the Shri Shakti Award (2023) and the Savitri Bai Phule Award (2026) and many more. She has emerged as a role model for rural women, demonstrating that ethical practices, innovation, and perseverance can lead to sustainable success.



[Source: Raju G. Teggelli and Sanmathi Naik A.T.S. (KVK, Kalaburagi-I, Karnataka)]

28. Women-Led Organic Tea Entrepreneurship in India's Emerging Rural Startup Ecosystem

Profile

Name : Shyli Singh
Age : 37 years
Education : Post Graduate
Phone : 7384119016
Address : Village- Ghargilagach,
District: Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal
Enterprise : Agri-processing/Tea processing



Background

Mrs. Shyli Singh developed an interest in tea gardening during her teenage years, while assisting her father. Although she discontinued this work after marriage, her passion for tea cultivation remained strong. After completing her M.A. in Bengali, she took up a teaching job but resigned after one year due to personal reasons. For the past four years, she has been practicing organic farming in her ≈1.6 ha tea garden and has recently started a venture producing organic hand-rolled golden tea buds, turning her long-standing interest into an enterprise.

Catalyst of Change

Her own passion for production of 100% organic tea that is chemical free, healthy and environment friendly. Her moto is to promote small farmers to produce organic tea and to create awareness about organic tea. She also aims to empower women tea producers and engage rural youth in organic tea production as a start-up and entrepreneurial activity. She received strong support in this initiative from her younger brother, who works in Delhi and assists in the marketing of her tea.

Pathway to Progress

She produces premium hand-rolled tea buds, supported by FSSAI certification, and has introduced innovative blends with *Aprajita* and hibiscus. Her enterprise, which is progressing toward organic certification, generates about 480 man-days of employment annually and serves as an inspiring example of women-led agri-entrepreneurship in the region.



Highlights

- » Establishment of small tea processing unit
- » Crafting premium hand-rolled tea buds
- » Innovative move like blending tea with *Aprajita* and *hibiscus* flowers.
- » Acting as Master trainer

Productivity and Income Enhancement

She is practising organic tea cultivation and adopting natural farming methods as learned from, KVK, Uttar Dinajpur. She harvests about 40 kg of tender tea leaves daily and processes 4-5 kg of hand-rolled golden bud tea, with an annual production of around 1,500 kg. By following organic practices, she has reduced the cost of cultivation by 5-7%. Although her enterprise is still in the initial stage, she is earning a net profit of about ₹80,000 per annum, demonstrating the potential of small-scale, value-added tea entrepreneurship.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her journey is truly inspiring. With clear vision and determination, she is striving to enhance the income of small-scale organic tea producers while establishing herself as a budding entrepreneur. Her enterprise has not only provided her with economic returns but has also strengthened her social and economic empowerment. In a largely male-dominated sector, she continues to innovate and develop quality products that reflect her dedication and hard work. Her achievements have also received media recognition, with her success story featured in two newspapers, highlighting her remarkable progress.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her leadership has inspired other women to embrace scientific farming methods, leading to a ripple effect that fosters confidence, collaboration, and innovation among rural women farmers.



[Source: Sharma, A. and Sarkar, S. (KVK, Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal)]

29. Integrated Farming for Livelihood Security among Tribals of Chhattisgarh

Profile

Name : Aditi Kashyap
Age : 51 years
Education : 12th standard
Phone : 9899832290
Address : Village-Paliguda, Kawardha, Kabirdham, Chhattisgarh
Enterprise : Integrated Farming System (Crop + Horticulture + Livestock + Fisheries + Vermicompost)



Background

Mrs. Aditi Kashyap, a progressive woman farmer belongs to farming family and initially practiced conventional agriculture. Managing a landholding of 5.0 ha, she cultivated paddy, maize, wheat, gram, and pigeon pea using traditional methods. Despite growing multiple crops, her farm income remained low due to poor productivity, high input costs, and inefficient use of farm resources. Continuous dependence on chemical fertilizers adversely affected soil health and resulted in declining crop and livestock diversity. These challenges constrained farm profitability and sustainability, motivating her to explore innovative and integrated approaches to farming.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point in her farming journey occurred in 2015, when she visited Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kawardha. Through interactions with KVK scientists, she was introduced to the concept and benefits of the Integrated Farming System (IFS). Recognizing its potential to enhance income, sustainability, and efficient resource utilization, she decided to adopt diversified farming components. With technical guidance, convergence support from allied departments, and regular participation in trainings, seminars, and workshops organized by KVK, her knowledge, skills, and confidence steadily improved. Continuous technical backstopping played a crucial role in successful adoption of innovative practices.

Pathway to Progress

With systematic planning and scientific guidance from KVK, she implemented the IFS across her entire 5.0 ha land. Her IFS model includes crop production, fruit orchard, vegetable and spice



Highlights

- » Adopted IFS with crops, horticulture, dairy, fisheries, and vermicompost on 5.0 ha.
- » Enhanced income and soil health through diversification and resource recycling.
- » Empowered as a role-model woman farmer, inspiring others to adopt IFS.
- » Nationally recognized with Krishak Samridhi and Krishi Karman Awards.

cultivation, dairy farming with milch cows, a fish pond, and a vermicompost production unit. The fish pond supports the production of approximately 1,000 fishes per 90-day cycle, while vermicomposting enables efficient recycling of crop residues and animal waste. Integration of these components reduced dependence on external inputs, lowered the cost of cultivation, improved soil fertility, and ensured year-round income. The diversified farming system strengthened ecological balance while enhancing overall farm sustainability.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Adoption of the IFS significantly improved farm productivity and profitability. Diversification ensured multiple income streams throughout the year, reduced risk associated with mono-cropping, and optimized use of farm resources. Improved soil health and reduced input costs further contributed to enhanced net returns, making farming a reliable and sustainable livelihood option for herself.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The implementation of IFS transformed her economic status, self-confidence, and social recognition. Her farm has emerged as a demonstration model of sustainable agriculture in Kabirdham district. In recognition of her outstanding contribution and high paddy productivity, she was conferred the Krishak Samridhi Award (2019) on 29 July 2019 and later received the prestigious Krishi Karman Award (2016-17) from the Government of India during Farmers' Day celebrations held on 02 January 2020 in Karnataka. Her achievements stand as a strong example of women empowerment through successful agriculture.

Influence on Other Farmers

As a recognized role model farmer, Mrs. Aditi Kashyap actively shares her experiences and technical knowledge with fellow farmers. Her integrated farming model has inspired many neighbouring farmers to adopt IFS practices, contributing to sustainable agriculture, enhanced farm incomes, and improved livelihoods in the region. Her journey demonstrates how scientific interventions, institutional support, and women's leadership can collectively drive rural transformation.



30. Mushroom Enterprise as a Women-led Livelihood Model in Central India

Profile

Name : Meeta Thakur
Age : 33 years
Education : B. Com. (Computer)
Phone : 6261230557
Address : Banarji Colony, Pipariya,
Narmadapuram, Madhya Pradesh
Enterprise : Oyster Mushroom Cultivation & Value Addition



Background

Mrs. Meeta Thakur is a progressive woman entrepreneur from Narmadapuram, Madhya Pradesh, who sought a home-based, reliable income-generating activity. Recognizing the high nutritional value, short production cycle, and growing market demand for oyster mushrooms, she decided to take up mushroom cultivation as a small-scale enterprise. With limited initial resources, she approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bankhedi for scientific training and technical guidance, aiming to transform her aspiration into a sustainable livelihood.

Catalyst of Change

Under the continuous guidance of KVK scientists and Mrs. Akansha Pandey, she began oyster mushroom cultivation using 1,000 production bags. She adopted low-cost, scientific production technology, hygienic practices, and management techniques. Capacity-building interventions enabled her to learn value addition, including dried mushrooms and mushroom powder production, extending product shelf life, reducing post-harvest losses, and accessing new market segments.

Pathway to Progress

The model demonstrates high profitability with low investment, making it an ideal enterprise for women entrepreneurs. She plans to expand production, improve packaging, strengthen branding, and promote products through digital platforms. She manages a family of five and runs KT Mushroom Farm, where she is engaged in oyster mushroom production and value addition as a sustainable agri-enterprise. Through oyster mushroom production and value addition, Mrs. Thakur achieved financial independence while supplying nutritious mushroom products.



Highlights

- » Established KT Mushroom Farm, a home-based oyster mushroom cultivation and value-addition enterprise.
- » Produced ~1,200 kg per cycle from 1,000 bags, earning Rs. 1.45 lakh net profit per cycle.
- » Adopted hygienic production and value-added products (dried mushrooms, powder) to enhance shelf life and market reach.
- » Achieved financial independence and inspires women and rural youth to adopt mushroom farming as a sustainable livelihood.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her enterprise provides consistent income and encourages adoption of mushroom cultivation as a sustainable livelihood option among women and rural youth. Oyster mushroom cultivation using 1,000 bags yields approximately 1,200 kg per cycle, generating a gross income of Rs. 1.80 lakh at Rs. 150 per kg. With production costs of Rs. 34,800, the enterprise earns a net profit of around Rs. 1.45 lakh per cycle.

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has gained confidence, respect, and recognition within her family and community. She actively mentors women farmers and youth, promoting mushroom farming as a viable self-employment option. While she has not yet received formal awards, her farm serves as a replicable model of women-led agri-entrepreneurship.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her success has inspired several women and youth in the region to take up mushroom cultivation. Through training, demonstrations, and mentoring, Mrs. Meeta Thakur contributes to strengthening women-led entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods in Narmadapuram district.



[Source Pandey, A. and Garg, S.K. (KVK, Narmadapuram, Madhya Pradesh)]

31. Bamboo-Based Green Enterprise for Sustainable Livelihood

Profile

Name : Ankita Vyas
Age : 40 years
Education : MCA, MSW
Phone : 7869522536
Address : Village-Hatpipliya, Piploda, District-Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh
Enterprise : Bamboo Plantation & Bamboo-based Handicrafts (Women-led Collective Enterprise)



Background

Mrs. Ankita Vyas, a progressive woman entrepreneur from Ratlam district, Madhya Pradesh, envisioned a sustainable livelihood model for rural women based on locally available natural resources. Prior to the intervention, organized women-led enterprises were absent in the area, and income-generating opportunities were limited. Recognizing the untapped potential of bamboo and palm leaves, she conceptualized a cluster-based, eco-friendly enterprise that could provide income security, preserve traditional skills, and promote collective entrepreneurship among rural women.

Catalyst of Change

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Ratlam played a decisive role in shaping Mrs. Ankita Vyas's entrepreneurial journey. KVK scientists identified bamboo plantation and bamboo-based handicrafts as viable livelihood options for the district and provided continuous technical guidance, training, exposure visits, and handholding support. Women groups were trained in scientific bamboo plantation, value addition, product design, quality enhancement, packaging, labelling, and market-oriented production. Financial and technical support from NABARD, MEDA, and LEDA further strengthened the initiative. The enterprise operates through a functional production unit that has remained stable since its establishment in 2021.

Pathway to Progress

With technical support from KVK, women were organized into group-based bamboo plantation and handicraft clusters, ensuring collective production and income stability through buy-back



Highlights

- » Women-led bamboo enterprise started in 2021 at Ratlam with KVK support.
- » Scientific training & value addition enabled eco-friendly, market-ready products.
- » Annual income: Rs. 3.0 lakh
- » Wide social reach: 200+ women engaged through plantation and handicrafts

arrangements. Traditional bamboo and palm leaf products were upgraded with improved designs, better finishing and eco-friendly packaging, enhancing their market value. Initially, the products were marketed through local markets and exhibitions. Subsequently, with guidance from KVK, the enterprise adopted digital marketing platforms, including social media and WhatsApp Business, which significantly expanded its market reach, enabled direct interaction with customers, and improved price realization.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Products are now sold under the brands Malva and Matti Mart through local markets, cluster-based sales and online platforms, generating an annual gross income of about Rs. 8.00 lakh and a net income of approximately Rs. 3.00 lakh, thereby establishing a sustainable women-led livelihood model.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

At present, 87 women farmers are actively engaged in bamboo value addition activities, while 123 women are associated with bamboo plantation initiatives. A functional bamboo handicraft cluster comprising 17 women artisans is generating steady employment and strengthening women's economic independence. The initiative has emerged as a replicable model of women-led green enterprise development in Ratlam district.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Ankita Vyas's initiative has inspired other women farmers and artisans to adopt bamboo-based livelihood activities. Encouraged by its positive impact, plans are underway to expand bamboo plantation coverage, strengthen branding and packaging, and explore wider institutional and online market linkages in collaboration with KVK Ratlam. Her journey exemplifies the role of scientific support, collective action, and women leadership in promoting sustainable rural livelihoods.



[Source: Sharma, B. and Tripathi S. (KVK, Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh)]

32. Economic Empowerment through Organic and Natural Farming

Profile

Name	: Divya Devi Verma
Age	: 47 years
Education	: 5th standard
Phone	: 9752016664
Address	: Village-Nagar Panchayat Malhar, Masturi, District-Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh
Enterprise	: Integrated, Organic and Natural Farming (Crops + Vegetables + Horticulture + Livestock)



Background

Mrs. Divya Devi Verma, a progressive woman farmer from Bilaspur district, began her farming journey in 2002 by following conventional agricultural practices dependent on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Owning two acres of land, she struggled for nearly fifteen years with rising input costs, declining soil fertility, uncertain yields, and limited income. Farming remained a livelihood of uncertainty rather than security, making it difficult to meet household expenses. By 2016, she realized that continuing with chemical-intensive farming would not ensure a sustainable future for her family, which became the foundation for her transformation.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point in her journey came when she realized that chemical farming was increasing production costs while reducing soil health and long-term profitability. Rising input prices, declining yields and health concerns motivated her to search for better alternatives. Her exposure to training programs, farmer-scientist interactions and demonstration programmes organized by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bilaspur became the real catalyst of change. KVK scientists further supported her with training on drip irrigation, preparation of bio inputs under organic and natural farming, live mulching, intercropping operations, grading and packaging and encouraged branding and organized marketing of her produce. Through these platforms, she learned about integrated farming systems, organic and natural farming practices, efficient resource utilization and various Government support schemes, etc. This knowledge gave her the confidence to shift from traditional methods to a sustainable and profitable farming model.



Highlights

- » Adopted integrated, organic and natural farming with the support of KVK Bilaspur.
- » Income nearly doubled through improved crops, drip irrigation and diversification.
- » Annual net income : Rs. 3.27 lakh
- » Empowered woman farmer, now a confident decision-maker and trainer.
- » Awarded Best Woman Farmer; her farm inspires 500+ visiting farmers.

Pathway to Progress

With continuous technical and institutional support, she systematically developed an integrated and sustainable farming system. She adopted line transplanting in paddy, introduced hybrid vegetables such as tomato and apple gourd for higher returns, and took up banana cultivation (G-9 variety) with support from the Horticulture Department. She availed benefits under various government schemes, including 50% subsidy for pack house construction under National Horticulture Mission, 50% subsidy for drip irrigation, and financial assistance for banana cultivation.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Adoption of integrated, organic, and natural farming practices led to improved productivity, reduced cultivation costs, enhanced soil health, and better market value of produce. Diversification minimized risk and ensured stable income throughout the year. Integration of crop production, vegetables, horticulture, and livestock under organic and natural farming ensured efficient use of resources, improved produce quality, and year-round income. As a result, her annual net income increased from Rs.1.80 lakh (2015–16) to Rs. 3.27 lakh (2024–25), ensuring livelihood security and economic stability.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Economic empowerment brought a profound social transformation her life. From having a limited role in household decisions, she emerged as a confident decision-maker in farm planning and an active participant in farmer meetings and training programmes. Financial independence earned her respect within the family and recognition in the village. Her dedication and achievements were formally acknowledged with the District-Level Best Woman Farmer Award, further boosting her confidence and leadership role.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Divya Devi Verma has become a role model for women farmers in the region. Her farm now serves as a learning and demonstration site, visited by over 500 farmers from Bilaspur district and adjoining areas. Many farmers have adopted horticulture, vegetables, fruit crops, and organic farming practices under the technical guidance of KVK Bilaspur. She actively motivates rural women to participate in farming decisions and view agriculture as a dignified profession with leadership opportunities, helping break traditional barriers and strengthen women's roles in rural society.



[Source: Sharma, G., Modi, S.K. and Sahu, J. (KVK, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh)]

33. Turning Farm Waste into Wealth in Semi-Arid Madhya Pradesh

Profile

Name : Kalpna Patidar
Age : 39 years
Education : 8th standard
Phone : 9993518501
Address : Village-Rampura, Mewasa, District-Shajapur, Madhya Pradesh
Enterprise : Crop Production + Vermicompost (Women-led Sustainable Agriculture)



Background

Mrs. Kalpna Patidar initially followed traditional farming practices, cultivating potato, onion, garlic, and soybean. Rising input costs, inefficient use of farm residues, and limited technical guidance restricted her farm income. Crop waste disposal posed environmental challenges, while gender-related constraints limited her decision-making and innovation adoption. Despite these challenges, she envisioned turning farm waste into a productive, income-generating resource.

Catalyst of Change

A significant change occurred when she approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Shajapur for technical guidance and support. She received regular training, demonstrations and motivation from KVK scientists on zero tillage cultivation, integrated farming and vermicompost production. The institutional support helped her adopt eco-friendly, low-cost and sustainable agricultural practices, while continuous handholding strengthened her confidence to implement new technologies on her farm.

Pathway to Progress

By integrating zero-tillage cultivation and vermicomposting, she established an integrated and sustainable farming system. Recycling crop residues into organic manure improved soil health, reduced chemical fertilizer dependency, and lowered production costs. Her initiative demonstrated the economic viability and sustainability of converting farm waste into wealth.



Highlights

- » Integrated crop cultivation with vermicompost production, turning farm waste into organic manure.
- » Net farm income increased from Rs. 1,00,000 to Rs. ≈1,20,000 annually
- » Inspired 20 nearby vermicompost units producing ~200 quintals per cycle.
- » Gained confidence, participates in farm and household decision-making, and motivates other women to adopt eco-friendly practices.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Net income from crop cultivation increased from around Rs. 1,00,000 to ≈ Rs. 1,20,000 in 2020–21 after adding vermicompost production. Her model inspired about 20 vermicompost units in nearby villages- Sunera, Panwadi, and Bedarnagar- collectively producing nearly 200 quintals of organic manure per 45–60 day cycle.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Patidar gained confidence and recognition within her family and community. She actively participates in farm and household decision-making

and motivates other women to adopt sustainable and income-generating agricultural practices. While she has not received formal awards, she is regarded as a local role model and informal mentor for women farmers in the region.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her success inspired other women farmers to adopt vermicomposting and sustainable agricultural practices. By demonstrating the benefits of resource recycling, Mrs. Patidar has contributed to improved soil health, enhanced farm income, and the adoption of eco-friendly farming methods in her community.



[Source: Rawal G.V., Ambawatia G.R., Dhakad S.S., Singh M., Tiwari, D.K. and Nand, N. (KVK, Shajapur, Madhya Pradesh)]

34. Certified Organic Horticulture for Prosperity in Narmada Valley Region

Profile

Name : Lalita Mukati
Age : 57 years
Education : BA
Mobile No : 9893253218
Address : Borlai, Barwani, Madhya Pradesh
Enterprise : Certified Organic Farming (Custard Apple & Field Crops)



Background

Mrs. Lalita Mukati, a progressive woman farmer was earlier practicing traditional agriculture dominated by cotton, maize and wheat under flood irrigation. Custard apple was cultivated on a very small area due to limited water availability and lack of technical knowledge. The farming system suffered from low productivity, high labour requirement, inefficient water use and poor market access, resulting in low economic returns. Like many women farmers, she also faced challenges in adopting improved technologies, organized marketing and value realization of horticultural produce.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point came when Smt. Lalita Mukati participated in a vocational training programme at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Barwani. Motivated by interactions with KVK scientists, she adopted organic farming of custard apple and other horticultural crops. With continuous technical guidance, she established a custard apple orchard during 2012-13 and obtained organic certification from the Madhya Pradesh State Organic Certification Agency, Bhopal. Further support was provided on drip irrigation, mulching, intercultural operations, grading, packaging, branding and organized marketing.

Pathway to Progress

She has adopted certified organic farming integrated with climate-smart technologies such as drip irrigation, mulching and staking, significantly reducing water use, labour cost and electricity consumption. She introduced grading and branding of custard apple under the trade name "Javik Ankita Sitafal" and developed strong market linkages with wholesalers in Indore, Bhopal, Surat, Ahmedabad and Pune. Her organic farm now covers about 35 acres, cultivating custard apple, sapota,



Highlights

- » Shifted to certified organic horticulture
- » Adopted drip irrigation and mulching for higher productivity and lower costs.
- » Branded “Javik Ankita Sitafal,” earning about Rs. 1.0 lakh per acre.
- » Became a role-model woman farmer, inspiring 200+ farmers to adopt organic farming.

guava, cotton, maize and wheat/chickpea using improved varieties.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her custard apple orchard yields more than 100 fruits per plant, with an average fruit weight of 300–400g, producing 10–12 tonnes per acre and generating an income of nearly Rs. 1.0 lakh per acre. Additional income of around Rs. 9,000 per year is earned through intercropping of soybean and wheat. Overall, certified organic farming and value addition substantially enhanced farm income, produce quality and long-term sustainability.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Lalita Mukati has emerged as a role model woman farmer in Barwani district. She is an active member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of KVK and Farmers Interest Groups, participating in trainings, discussions and exposure visits. Students from RAWE programmes regularly visit her farm for practical learning and internships in organic horticulture.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her farm has become a demonstration and learning site, visited by 220–250 farmers, leading to the adoption of horticulture crops with vegetables and spices over about 510 hectares in the region. Many farmers are now shifting towards organic farming under KVK guidance. Her journey highlights the transformative role of women farmers in building sustainable, profitable and environmentally responsible agri-food systems.



[Source: Badodiya S.K. and Jain, D.K (KVK, Barwani , Madhya Pradesh)]

35. Homemaker to Certified Value-Added Food Producer: An Inspiring Story of Tribal Women Empowerment

Profile

Name : Laxmi Dhruw
Age : 45 years
Education : MA (Political Science)
Mobile No : 8966043842
Address : Village- Batera, Tehsil- Dondi-Lohara, District-Balod, Chhattisgarh
Enterprise : Processing and value addition of farm and forest produce (Ber-Based products, Pickles, Papad, Badi, Bijori)



Background

Mrs. Laxmi Dhruw belongs to a small farmer family in a tribal-dominated region of Balod district. Like many rural women, she was primarily engaged in household responsibilities while also assisting farm labourers in agricultural operations and interacting with tribal women farmers on issues related to farming and household income. She possessed traditional skills in preparing homemade pickles, papad, badi, and bijori, mainly for household consumption. Her handmade pickles, prepared using traditional spices and fresh local ingredients, were well known and appreciated in her community during festivals and family gatherings, laying the foundation for her future entrepreneurial journey.

Catalyst of Change

Her entrepreneurial journey gained momentum after she attended a women farmers' training at KVK Balod, which exposed her to the income potential of value-added food products. Motivated by this, she formed the Kalyani Adiwasi Mahila Swa Sahayata Samuh in 2019 and led tribal women in utilizing locally abundant Ber to produce a range of value-added products, with Ber pickle emerging as the most popular. Continuous technical guidance from KVK and the Agriculture Department enabled the SHG to obtain FSSAI registration, ensuring quality production and better market linkage.

Pathway to Progress

As the popularity of Ber-based products increased, KVK Balod facilitated her selection under the Abhinav Scheme and R-ABI (RKVY-RAFTAAR Agri Business Incubator) project of IGKV, Raipur



Highlights

- » Transitioned from a housewife to a certified value-added food entrepreneur using locally available Ber.
- » Enabled by KVK Balod training, FSSAI registration, and R-ABI incubation support.
- » Achieved market success through exhibitions and NRLM linkages
- » Annual income: ~Rs. 3.0 lakh.
- » Emerged as a role model inspiring tribal women toward home-based enterprises.

in 2019. She underwent two months of intensive entrepreneurship and processing training, where her SHG's Ber-processed products received wide appreciation. The group was subsequently linked with BIHAN (NRLM), Zila Panchayat Balod, and entered into a market tie-up with a private company for wider product distribution.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Post-COVID, the SHG achieved significant economic gains, selling more than 20 quintals of value-added products and generating an annual income of approximately Rs. 3.0 lakh. Their products were supplied to prestigious platforms such as Sansad Bhawan, Raipur; Bastar Dussehra; ATIC Centre, Raipur; and multiple state-level exhibitions,

ensuring consistent market visibility and income flow. The initiative substantially improved household incomes and livelihood security of tribal women associated with the SHG.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Through sustained efforts and entrepreneurial success, Smt. Laxmi Dhruw has emerged as a symbol of women's empowerment in Balod district. She actively participates in trainings, exposure visits, and extension programmes organized by KVK Balod, continuously upgrading her skills. Her transformation from a housewife to a certified, branded, and market-linked entrepreneur has enhanced her social status and self-confidence.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Laxmi Dhruw's success has inspired numerous housewives and tribal women to initiate small-scale, home-based food processing enterprises based on local resources and personal interests. Women from different villages regularly visit her processing unit to learn techniques and seek guidance for income-generating activities. Her journey highlights the immense potential of women-led value addition in secondary agriculture, especially in tribal areas rich in forest and farm resources, and stands as a replicable model for sustainable rural livelihoods.



[Source: Chandrakar, D.M., Sahu, K.R. and Sahu, B. (KVK, Balod, Chhattisgarh)]

36. Integrated Farming for Self-Reliance in Bastar Plateau Region

Profile

Name : Lekesh Bai
Age : 52 years
Education : Primary Education
Mobile No : 9098150009
Address : Village-Thanabodi, Narharpur, Uttar Bastar Kanker, Chhattisgarh
Enterprise : Integrated Farming System (IFS)-Crop, Livestock & Allied Enterprises



Background

Prior to institutional intervention, Smt. Lekesh Bai practiced traditional agriculture, cultivating paddy and maize on about 4 acres of land using conventional methods. From this mono-cropping system, she earned an average annual net income of only Rs. 2.0 lakh, which was insufficient to meet household livelihood requirements. The farming system was rainfed, characterized by low productivity, limited diversification and high vulnerability to climatic risks, resulting in economic insecurity.

Catalyst of Change

A major transformation began in 2012 when she came into contact with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kanker. She participated in skill-oriented training programmes and received continuous technical guidance from KVK scientists. On the basis of these interventions, she shifted from mono-cropping to a diversified Rice-Maize-Vegetable cropping system. With support from the Agriculture Department, she constructed a tube well, and with assistance from the Horticulture Department, she adopted drip irrigation, thereby converting her rainfed area into an assured irrigated production system. These institutional and technological interventions laid a strong foundation for the adoption of an Integrated Farming System (IFS) model. Encouraged by the success of these innovations, she gradually expanded her farming area through purchase of land over the years, and at present manages 17 acres under a comprehensive IFS model supported by improved and model agricultural technologies.

Pathway to Progress

Through the adoption of scientific crop management, crop diversification, and a comprehensive



Highlights

- » Transformed 4 acres of subsistence farming into 17 acres of diversified IFS
- » Annual income rose from Rs. 2 lakh to Rs. 40 lakh through farming innovations, value addition, and market linkages.
- » Nationally recognized, receiving multiple awards including Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Antyodaya Krishi Puraskar
- » Her farm serves as a live demo visited by ~850 farmers, promoting IFS and sustainable agriculture in the region.

Integrated Farming System (IFS) on 17 acres, farm productivity and resource-use efficiency were significantly enhanced. The IFS comprised commercial vegetable cultivation under drip irrigation (about 12 acres), fodder production (3 acres), fish farming integrated with duck rearing (0.5 acre), goat rearing (0.5 acre), poultry farming (0.1 acre), and an improved dairy enterprise (40 cattle). Reliable irrigation, efficient recycling of farm resources, and value addition through processing of milk into paneer and ghee, along with strengthened market linkages, ensured year-round income generation, enhanced profitability, and additional employment, transforming the farm into a sustainable and market-oriented enterprise.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her adoption of comprehensive Integrated Farming System (IFS)—integrating drip-irrigated vegetable cultivation with dairy, goater, poultry, and fish–duck farming—substantially enhanced resource-use efficiency, farm productivity, and income stability. Value addition through processing of milk into ghee and paneer, coupled with strong market and enterprise linkages, further improved profitability and created additional employment opportunities. As a result, her annual net income increased from about Rs. 2.0 lakh in 2011 to nearly Rs. 40.0 lakh in 2025, representing a twenty-fold increase and marking a successful transition from subsistence agriculture to a sustainable, resilient, and market-oriented farming system.

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She is widely recognized as a leading woman farmer and agri-entrepreneur in Chhattisgarh for her outstanding contributions to integrated and diversified farming. Her innovations and leadership have earned her several prestigious honors, including the Farmer Fellowship Award (IGKV, Raipur, 2016), Innovative Farmer Award (ICAR, Patna, 2018), Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Krishi Antyodaya Puraskar – Zonal (2019), and the Best Farmer Award (ICAR-NAARM, 2025). Notably, she was conferred the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Antyodaya Krishi Puraskar (2018) on 16 July 2019 by the Union Agriculture Minister, along with a citation and a cash award of Rs. 50,000, recognizing her exemplary role in transforming subsistence farming into a sustainable, market-oriented enterprise.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her farm now serves as a live demonstration and learning site, visited by nearly 850 farmers and farm women from Kanker district and adjoining areas. Through exposure visits, trainings, and farmer-to-farmer interactions, many have adopted Integrated Farming Systems, diversification, and climate-resilient practices. Her journey exemplifies the transformative role of women innovators in strengthening rural livelihoods and promoting sustainable, knowledge-based agri-food systems.



[Source: Sahu, B., Nag, U. and Thakur, C.L. (KVK, Kanker, Chhattisgarh)]

37. Spawn to Success: Inspiring Journey of Women-Led Mushroom Entrepreneurship

Profile

Name : Nidhi Katare
Age : 41 years
Education : M.Sc. (Microbiology), M.Ed. DCA
Mobile No : 7000516011/ 9826631374
Address : Nirala Nagar, Singhpur Road,
Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh
Enterprise : Mushroom Spawn Production & Entrepreneurship



Background

The time when mushroom cultivation remained underutilized due to lack of quality spawn, technical know-how and organized support, she identified a critical gap in the mushroom value chain. Women's participation in such technical agri-enterprises was minimal owing to skill gaps, low confidence and limited institutional exposure. Recognizing the high-income potential and low land requirement of mushroom cultivation, she envisioned developing a reliable, science-based spawn production enterprise to support farmers and promote livelihood diversification.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point came when Smt. Nidhi Katare participated in training programmes on mushroom production organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Gwalior. She further strengthened her technical competence through advanced training on spawn production, exposure visits to successful mushroom enterprises, and continuous mentoring. Critical support from the Directorate of Mushroom Research (DMR), Solan, Himachal Pradesh—through provision of pure culture of oyster mushroom (*Pleurotus florida*)—enabled her to transition confidently from learning to enterprise establishment. These institutional interventions laid the foundation for her entrepreneurial journey.

Pathway to Progress

She started an enterprise by setting up an oyster mushroom spawn production unit in a rented space of about 1,500 sq. ft. in Gwalior. By adopting scientific protocols and maintaining consistent quality, her enterprise steadily expanded. She has developed a strong inter-state market network and supplies quality spawn to about 75 regular farmers across Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and



Highlights

- » Runs a successful mushroom spawn enterprise supplying quality spawn to farmers across multiple states.
- » Trained 110+ farmers and rural youth, promoting mushroom cultivation and entrepreneurship.
- » Strengthened the mushroom value chain with timely inputs, boosting farmers' confidence.
- » Annual income: over Rs. 7.0 lakh.
- » Nationally recognized as a woman agri-entrepreneur and technical expert, featured in media and awarded.

Chhattisgarh. Alongside production, she has trained more than 110 farmers and rural youth, contributing to horizontal spread of mushroom cultivation, employment generation and entrepreneurship development.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her enterprise ensures timely availability of quality inputs, reduces production risks, and instills confidence among growers, leading to wider adoption of mushroom-based livelihoods. Together with her husband, she has established Natural Bio Impact and Research Pvt. Ltd., supplying around 100 quintals of mushroom spawn annually and actively mentoring farmers in scientific mushroom cultivation, generating an annual income of over Rs. 7.0 lakh.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She acts as an expert by various organizations to deliver lectures and share her entrepreneurial experiences. Her success story has been showcased nationally through DD Kisan and published in ICAR-Kheti Magazine. She has also received prizes in various mushroom-related competitions organized by RVSKVV, Gwalior and the Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing, Bhopal, further validating her technical excellence and entrepreneurial impact.

Influence on Other Farmers

Today, Mrs. Nidhi Katare plays a vital role in strengthening the mushroom value chain by ensuring availability of quality spawn and providing hands-on guidance to farmers. Her enterprise has significantly boosted farmers' confidence in mushroom cultivation, leading to wide acceptance and adoption across states.



38. Women-Led Farmer Producer Organisations for Sustainable Farming System

Profile

Name : Nirmala Bhaskar
Age : 53 years
Education : Post-Graduate
Mobile No : 9770428309
Address : Village-Mulla, Bhanupratappur, District-Uttar Bastar Kanker, Chhattisgarh
Enterpris : Women-led Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) – Millets, Pulses and Indigenous Rice



Background

Mrs. Nirmala Bhaskar, a progressive woman farmer from the Bastar region, had been cultivating about 7 acres of leased land with minor millets and a local scented rice variety. Despite hard work, farming remained subsistence-oriented due to lack of organized marketing, dependence on middlemen and absence of value addition, resulting in poor returns for her and other tribal farmers.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point came with her association with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kanker. With technical guidance and institutional support, she mobilized nearly 400 tribal farmers from remote villages and led the formation of a women-led FPO named Bastar Agro Producer Company Limited. Continuous mentoring by KVK enabled collective planning, improved production practices, and organized marketing of millets, pulses and indigenous rice.

Pathway to Progress

The FPO focused on collective production, processing and marketing of kodo, kutki, ragi, pulses and the indigenous scented rice variety Chirainkhi, along with conservation of local crop biodiversity. Capacity building, crop diversification, value addition and assured procurement, including supply of millets to Anganwadi centres during 2024-25 strengthened market access. Establishment of three Custom Hiring Centres, convergence with government schemes and livelihood diversification reduced production costs, improved mechanization access and enhanced income security.



Highlights

- » Formed a women-led FPO of 400 tribal farmers for collective farming and marketing.
- » Promoted value addition and assured markets for millets, pulses and indigenous rice.
- » Increased women farmers' income to Rs. 4.50 lakh annually.
- » Recognized with the Excellent Farmer Award-2024 by the Government of Chhattisgarh.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The women-led FPO has emerged as a scalable model for nutrition-sensitive, climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture in the Bastar region. It has strengthened the socio-economic status of tribal women farmers and promoted conservation of indigenous crops. In recognition of her outstanding contribution to millet promotion among tribal farmers, Smt. Nirmala Bhaskar was awarded the "Excellent Farmer Award – 2024" by the Government of Chhattisgarh (Kanker district).

Influence on Other Farmers

Her leadership has inspired large-scale participation of tribal farmers in collective farming and FPO-based enterprises, demonstrating the power of women-led institutions in transforming subsistence agriculture into sustainable, market-oriented livelihoods.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Through collective farming and organized marketing, women members of the FPO now earn about Rs. 4.5 lakh annually, gaining stable livelihoods, local employment and leadership roles. The shift from distress sales to assured markets significantly improved income resilience and sustainability.



39. Collective Organic Farming for Women Empowerment

Profile

Name	: Payal Patidar
Age	: 33 years
Education	: Engineering Graduate, MBA
Mobile No.	: 8839175105
Address	: Kiloda, M. Badodiya, Shajapur, Madhya Pradesh
Enterprise	: Organic farming, organic input production and Gir cow-based dairy enterprise



Background

Mrs. Payal Patidar represents a new generation of rural women entrepreneurs who chose purpose over comfort. After completing her engineering and MBA in Indore, she left a private-sector job and returned to her native village Kiloda with a vision to practice sustainable agriculture. Earlier, farming in the area was dominated by chemical-intensive practices, rising input costs, declining soil health and limited income opportunities for women. Women largely remained confined to labour roles, with minimal participation in innovation, entrepreneurship or decision-making.

Catalyst of Change

A decisive shift occurred when she underwent skill-oriented training at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Shajapur, with support from ATMA Shajapur. Through structured training on organic farming, vermicomposting and vermiculture, she gained scientific knowledge, confidence and motivation to adopt a self-reliant organic production system. Continuous technical guidance from KVK enabled her transition from conventional practices to integrated, eco-friendly farming.

Pathway to Progress

She established a vermicomposting and vermiculture unit, installed two biogas plants and began producing a wide range of organic inputs including vermicompost, biogas slurry, jeevamrit, panch-patti kada, biofertilizers and waste decomposer. She's got a thriving eco-business.

- » Vermicomposting and biogas units produce organic inputs, earning her Rs. 20 lakh (Rs. 14-15 lakh profit)



Highlights

- » Mrs. Payal Patidar runs a sustainable organic farm with Gir cows, producing milk, ghee, vermicompost, and cow dung cakes.
- » Adopted organic inputs, biogas, and vermicomposting, boosting productivity and lowering costs.
- » Earns significant income while providing employment to women in her village.
- » Annual net profit: approx. Rs. 25–28 lakh
- » Serves as a role model, empowering women farmers and recognized for her contributions to organic farming.

- » 35 Gir cows give 100 litres milk/day, making A2 ghee sold at Rs. 2,500/kg
- » Rs. 15 lakh annual income from ghee (Rs. 10–11 lakh profit)
- » Sold 2 lakh cow dung cakes for Rs. 2 lakh extra
- » Using organic inputs on her fields boosts soil and crops

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Through the integration of organic crop production, livestock rearing, on-farm input generation and value addition, she has developed a low-cost, climate-resilient and economically viable farming model. The enterprise generates an overall annual net profit of approximately Rs. 25–28 lakh, while substantially reducing dependence on external inputs. Efficient recycling of farm waste, diversification of income sources and adoption of indigenous knowledge-based practices have ensured long-term economic stability, enhanced farm productivity and environmental sustainability.

Through the integration of organic crop production, livestock rearing,

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has trained and motivated more than 50 women farmers to adopt organic farming and vermicompost production, helping them become economically independent and confident decision-makers. In recognition of her outstanding contribution to organic farming and women empowerment, she was honoured by the Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Shajapur, the Hon'ble President, Zila Panchayat, Shajapur, and the District Collector, Shajapur, during a district-level function.

Influence on Other Farmers

With continuous support from KVK and ATMA Shajapur, Smt. Payal Patidar has emerged as a role model for women-led organic agri-entrepreneurship in Shajapur district. Her journey clearly demonstrates that scientific training, local resource utilization and collective action by women can transform agriculture into a sustainable, profitable and empowering livelihood system.



[Source: Rawal, G.V., Ambawatia, G.R., Dhakad, S.S., Singh, M., Tiwari, D.K. and Nand, N. (KVK, Shajapur, Madhya Pradesh)]

40. Integrating Tradition with Innovation: The Sustainable Farming Journey of a Woman Farmer of Chhattisgarh

Profile

Name : Rajni Nishad
Age : 55 years
Education : Not specified
Mobile No : 9579060975
Address : Godhi (S), Bhatapara, Balodabazar-
Bhatapara, Chhattisgarh
Enterprise : Integrated Vegetable and Paddy Farming



Background

Mrs. Rajni Nishad practiced traditional paddy cultivation for several years, which gave limited income due to low productivity, monsoon dependence, and rising input costs. Small-scale vegetable cultivation with conventional methods resulted in poor returns. Limited access to improved technologies, quality inputs, and scientific crop management further constrained income and livelihood security.

Catalyst of Change

With guidance from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bhatapara, she received training on scientific vegetable cultivation, seasonal crop planning, nutrient and pest management, natural farming practices, and efficient water use. Regular advisory services, field visits, and capacity-building programmes enabled her to adopt improved practices and integrate vegetable cultivation with paddy farming, enhancing resource utilization and income stability.

Pathway to Progress

By integrating seasonal vegetable cultivation with traditional paddy farming. She optimized land and labour use, reduced dependence on a single crop, and lowered cultivation costs through natural farming methods. Crop diversification increased overall farm productivity by about 147%, vegetable cultivation generated an additional net annual income of Rs. 85,770 per hectare, and production costs declined by around 40%. The diversified system also improved household nutrition and minimized economic risks. Productivity & Income Enhancement The integration of vegetables with paddy farming significantly increased productivity, income, and farm resilience. Improved agronomic practices and crop diversification provided higher returns and better utilization of farm resources. add income.



Diversified farming system through vegetable cultivation and paddy farming

Highlights

- » Integrated vegetables with paddy, boosting productivity and income.
- » Reduced costs and risks through improved practices and diversification.
- » Gained confidence and became a role model for women farmers.
- » Inspired neighbours to adopt sustainable, diversified farming.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her intervention enhanced decision-making within farm and household activities, increased confidence, and social recognition. She has emerged as a role model for women farmers and SHGs, inspiring neighbouring women to adopt diversified farming systems.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her success encouraged other women farmers to integrate vegetable cultivation with traditional crops, promoting resilient and sustainable farming systems

in the village. Regular demonstrations and knowledge-sharing have helped scale up adoption of improved practices among local women farmers.



41. Woman Empowerment through Self-Reliant Organic Farming

Profile

Name	: Sumitra Patel
Age	: 52 years
Education	: Engineering Graduate & MBA
Mobile No	: 9009366896
Address	: Malgaon, Anarad, Dhar, Madhya Pradesh
Enterprise	: Organic Farming & Value Addition



Background

Earlier, farming in the village was largely dependent on conventional practices with high input costs and declining soil health. Income from agriculture was limited and opportunities for women to participate in income-generating activities were minimal. Lack of awareness about organic farming, on-farm input production and waste recycling restricted adoption of sustainable practices. Women farmers mainly remained labour contributors with little role in innovation, entrepreneurship or decision-making.

Catalyst of Change

A major transformation began when she underwent a 21-day skill development training under ASCI at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Dhar, focusing on organic farming, vermicomposting and vermiculture. With technical guidance and motivation from KVK Dhar and ATMA Dhar, she gained confidence and scientific knowledge to implement organic technologies on her own farm. This institutional support played a crucial role in shifting her from conventional farming to a self-reliant organic production system.

Pathway to Progress

After training, she has established a vermicomposting and vermiculture unit, installed two biogas plants, and started producing a range of organic inputs such as vermicompost, biogas slurry, jeevamrit, paanch patti kada, biofertilizers and waste decomposer. She practices organic farming using her own inputs, reducing dependency on external chemicals and lowering the cost of cultivation. Over two years, she produced 475 quintals of vermicompost and 17 kg of earthworms. Out of this, 283 quintals were sold at Rs. 700 per quintal, generating an income of Rs. 1.98 lakh, while the remaining quantity



Highlights

- » Shifted from conventional to self-reliant organic farming and on-farm input production
- » Increased income and soil health by producing and selling vermicompost and earthworm
- » Empowered women by forming and training vermicompost groups for collective income generation
- » Became a role model for women-led sustainable agriculture in the region

was used on her farm to improve soil fertility and crop productivity.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Through group-based production and marketing of organic products, women are now earning over Rs. 1,00,000 per year as additional income. She has personally trained and motivated more than 50 women farmers, helping them become economically independent and active decision-makers in farming and household activities.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her success has significantly enhanced her confidence, social recognition and leadership role in the community. She has motivated rural women to adopt organic farming as a viable enterprise and formed vermicompost production groups, involving more than 30 women farmers.

In recognition of her outstanding contribution to organic farming and women empowerment, Smt. Sumitra Patel was honoured on 21 February 2021 at KVK Dhar by Shri Chattar Singh Darbar, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Dhar, Smt. Malti Mohan Patel, Hon'ble President, Zila Panchayat, Dhar, and Shri Alok Kumar Singh (IAS), Collector, Dhar, during an event organized by Dainik Bhaskar newspaper.

Influence on Other Farmers

With continuous support from KVK Dhar and ATMA Dhar, Smt. Sumitra Patel has become a role model for organic farming and women-led agri-entrepreneurship in Dhar district. Her efforts have led to widespread adoption of organic inputs, increased income and improved soil health in her village and nearby areas. Her journey conveys a strong message that scientific training, local resource utilization and collective women action can transform agriculture into a sustainable, profitable and empowering livelihood system.



[Source: Chauhan, S.S., Pandey, A., and Mandloi, D.S. (KVK, Dhar, Madhya Pradesh)]

42. Livelihood through Integrated Farming: Journey of a Woman Agri-Entrepreneur from Chhattisgarh

Profile

Name	:	Sushila Gabel
Age	:	63 years
Education	:	12th standard
Mobile No	:	9340993093
Address	:	Jajan, Sakti (earlier Janjgir-Champa), Chhattisgarh
Enterprise	:	Integrated Farming System (Crops + Horticulture + Fisheries + Organic Inputs)



Background

Mrs. Sushila Gabel initially practiced conventional rice-wheat farming on 1.786 ha under flood irrigation, facing low productivity, high input costs, declining soil fertility, poor water-use efficiency, weak market linkages, and uncertain income. Limited access to modern technologies and value addition constrained her growth and confidence as an agri-entrepreneur.

Catalyst of Change

Her transformation began in 2010 after participating in KVK Janjgir-Champa trainings. Continuous technical backstopping motivated her to adopt an Integrated Farming System (IFS). With KVK guidance, she established mango and banana orchards (2011), adopted IPM, balanced nutrition, mulching, fisheries, and began producing bio-fertilizers and organic inputs (PSB, BGA, azolla, vermicompost, green manures), reducing chemical dependence and improving soil health.

Pathway to Progress

She developed a diversified IFS integrating rice, wheat, vegetables, banana, mango, fisheries, and organic input production. Crop residues were recycled through vermicomposting; pond water supported nutrient recycling; vegetables ensured quick cash flow and nutrition; banana and mango provided staggered and long-term returns. Organized marketing improved price realization. A small enterprise selling bio-fertilizers and organic manures added steady income and promoted eco-friendly practices locally.



Highlights

- » Community leader and mentor, actively supporting women SHGs and capacity building.
- » Farm developed as a live demonstration and learning centre.
- » Earns ~Rs.6.0 lakh annually through diversified IFS.
- » Recipient of prestigious national and state-level awards for agriculture and women empowerment.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Through enterprise integration and resource recycling, her farm now generates ~Rs. 6.00 lakh annually, reduces production risk, optimizes land-water-nutrient use, and ensures year-round employment—demonstrating the economic viability of IFS for smallholders.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Received several prestigious awards, including the Best Woman Farmer Award (2010 and 2011), Smt.

Sushila Gabel has emerged as a respected community leader and role model for rural women, serving as a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of KVK, a master trainer (Mitantin), and an active mentor to women Self-Help Groups. In recognition of her outstanding contributions to agriculture and women empowerment, she has Mahindra Prasiddhi Krishi Prerana Samman (2013), the Krishi Karman Award (2014) at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, presented by the Hon'ble President of India, and the Doordarshan Mahila Kisan Award.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her journey inspires widespread adoption of integrated and organic practices, women's entrepreneurship, and sustainable agriculture across the region—showcasing how knowledge, institutions, and women's leadership can transform rural livelihoods.



[Source: Mahant, K.D., Pradhan, A.K., Modi, R.S., Dhruv, A., Suryawanshi, S.K. and Singh, P.K. (KVK, Janjgir Champa, Chhattisgarh)]

43. High-Tech Horticulture Transforming Farming Systems in Chhattisgarh Plains

Profile

Name : Vallari Chandrakar
Age : 32 years
Education : Postgraduate
Mobile No. : 9407990188
Address : Kamrodh, Mahasamund, Chhattisgarh
Enterprise : Hi-tech Horticulture (Vegetables & Fruit Crops)



Background

Mrs. Vallari Chandrakar is a remarkable example of how passion, innovation, and courage can redefine livelihoods. Earlier working as an Assistant Professor in a college at Raipur, she chose to leave a secure academic career to pursue her deep interest in horticulture. At a time when farming was still viewed as a low-return activity, she envisioned horticulture as a profitable and empowering enterprise. Her decision marked a bold shift from conventional career paths to entrepreneurship in agriculture.

Catalyst of Change

She observed that horticulture farmers were largely dependent on traditional practices, leading to low productivity and poor economic returns due to lack of technical knowledge. Determined to change this scenario, she decided to adopt modern, hi-tech farming practices. In 2016, she resigned from her teaching job and fully committed herself to farming as a profession, passion, and means of social service. She continuously upgraded her knowledge through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), interaction with progressive farmers, books, and exposure visits, laying a strong scientific foundation for her venture.

Pathway to Progress

She began farming on 15 acres of land in Village Kamrodh. Despite initial challenges and social discouragement, she persisted and gradually expanded her operations to about 24 acres across Kamrodh, Sirri, Ghuchapali, and nearby villages. She adopted high-tech cultivation practices in crops such as chilli, bamboo, papaya, guava, and other horticultural crops. By integrating improved technologies with efficient farm management, she developed her farm into a model hi-tech horticulture



Highlights

- » Established a model hi-tech horticulture farm after transitioning from an academic career.
- » Expanded scientifically managed horticulture across multiple villages and larger area.
- » Promoted crop diversification by showcasing profitable alternatives to paddy.
- » Annual income: more than Rs. 20 lakh
- » Recognized as a role model woman farmer with state-level honours and leadership roles.

unit, demonstrating the economic viability of modern horticulture.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Through adoption of improved varieties, scientific crop management, and hi-tech horticultural practices, her farm achieved significantly higher productivity, superior quality produce, and enhanced profitability. Diversification into vegetables and fruit crops ensured year-round income and reduced dependence on traditional mono-cropping systems. As a result, her integrated hi-tech horticulture enterprise now generates an annual income of more than Rs. 20 lakh, establishing farming as a sustainable, profitable, and aspirational livelihood.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her efforts have been widely recognized by the media, and she has received several honors, including recognition from the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. She has also been nominated as a Board Member of Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwavidyalaya (IGKV), Raipur. Her journey reflects a significant shift in the local farming scenario, with increasing participation of women in horticulture and agri-entrepreneurship.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Vallari Chandrakar has emerged as a role model for the farming community, especially women farmers in Mahasamund district. She actively motivates and supports other farmers to adopt horticulture as an entrepreneurial activity. Inspired by her success, many farmers who earlier cultivated only paddy have started vegetable cultivation during the rabi season.



[Source: Dubey, S. and Sharma, R.L. (KVK, Mahasamund, Chhattisgarh)]

44. Millet-based Entrepreneurship Driving Prosperity in Coastal Odisha

Profile

Name : Mamata Samal
Age : 43 years
Education : B. Sc., Diploma in Livestock Inspector
Mobile No : 7978154860
Address : Vill - Rahania, Dist- Bhadrak, Odisha
Enterprise : Farming, Value Addition, and Women-led Manufacturing Unit (Millet-based products)



Background

Mrs. Mamata Samal, a determined and energetic farm woman from Rahania village, faced numerous challenges in her agricultural pursuits. With 4 acres of land, she initially followed traditional farming practices, cultivating paddy, turmeric, pulses, and vegetables. However, low productivity, limited access to resources, and lack of market linkages restricted her income, making it difficult for her to break even.

Catalyst of Change

Her life took a turning point when she connected with ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar, through her Kalathakur FPO. She received training and support on improved farming practices, value addition, and entrepreneurship development. ICAR-CIWA introduced her to woman-friendly agri-tools, high-quality seeds, and innovative technologies, which significantly enhanced her farm productivity. She also established a women-led manufacturing unit, preparing millet-based products like millet laddu, millet flour, millet snacks, til (sesame) laddu, and groundnut chikki. The unit supplies products to various shops, generating additional income.

Pathway to Progress

She has adopted diversified and sustainable farming practices, cultivating crops like paddy, turmeric, blackgram, greengram and high-value vegetables. With ICAR-CIWA's support, she established a 'One Product One Station Stall' at Bhadrak Railway Station, providing market linkages for her products. She mobilized a Women Farmer Interest Group (CIWA-Keshab Farmer Interest Group), empowering fellow women farmers to adopt innovative practices.



Highlights

- » Diversified Farming: Cultivates multiple crops (paddy, turmeric, pulses, veggies) and maintains hybrid cows for extra income.
- » Value Addition: Runs a women-led unit making millet-based products.
- » Market Linkages: Sells products through 'One Product One Station Stall'.
- » Women's Empowerment: Mentors other women farmers, leads SHG/FPO/community, and inspires women to become Atmanirbhar (self-reliant).
- » Earns Rs 3.50 Lakh annually

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mamata's efforts led to significant improvements:

- » Increased income from ₹2,000 to ₹4,50,000 per annum
- » Profit of ₹3,50,000 per annum
- » Improved productivity and crop yields

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her achievements earned her recognition as Lakhpati Didi by the Govt. of Odisha. She received the 'Sri Anna Abhiyan Award' from of Odisha; 'Best Women Entrepreneur' from Netaji Yuvak Sangha; 'Best Women Leader' from NABARD; 'Best Women Farmer' award from ICAR-CIWA, acknowledging her contributions to agriculture and women's empowerment.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Mamata's success has inspired farm women from nearby villages to adopt innovative farming practices. She is a trailblazer, empowering women to become Atmanirbhar and Empowered, and demonstrating the potential of women-led entrepreneurship in agriculture.



45. Mushroom-based Entrepreneurship: Transforming Rural Women's life in Odisha

Profile

Name : Gauripriya Mohapatra
Age : 48 years
Education : B.A
Mobile No : 6371699061
Address : Vill -Nuasahai, Dist-Puri, Odisha
Enterprise : Vegetable farming, Mushroom farming, Value Addition (Rice and pulse-based products)



Background

Mrs. Gauripriya faced numerous challenges, including limited access to credit, technology, institutions, and markets, which restricted women's participation in economic activities. Weak SHGs and prevailing social norms further exacerbated the situation. However, these obstacles only fueled her resolve to create change.

Catalyst of Change

Her strong motivation, exposure to the SHG movement, and interaction with ICAR-CIWA Team inspired her to mobilize women and create a lasting impact. Training support from ICAR-CIWA combined with her innate leadership skills, enabled her to drive transformative change. Through an Institute Research Project of ICAR-CIWA which was designed to mobilize women farmers of seven villages Sakhigopal and Balanga block of Puri district, she came in contact with the Team ICAR-CIWA. She had been trained for mushroom farming at ICAR-CIWA and harboured the idea of leading women into mushroom cultivation, as inputs required for mushroom cultivation were readily available at their door steps, thereby proving to be very cost-effective and rewarding with in very short period of time. It led to the formation of "Bhargabi Women Mushroom Producer Federation", consisting of 631 farmwomen belonging to 27 SHGs across 17 villages of five Panchayats.

Pathway to Progress

She has adopted mushroom cultivation with technical backstopping from ICAR-CIWA. Subsequently, she diversified into value-added enterprises including wadi making, puffed rice production, and dal milling, with continued technical support from ICAR-CIWA. In addition, she mobilized women farmers



Highlights:

- » Annual income: Rs. 12.0 Lakhs
- » Credit Access: Rs. 1.2 Crores mobilized for 27 SHGs
- » Value Addition: Mushroom cultivation, oil extraction, and other activities enhanced income
- » Role Model: inspired women agripreneurs in Puri district

month.

- » Employment Generation: Self-employment for 1,000+ women and local employment through processing units and CHCs.
- » Reduction in Drudgery: Mechanization reduced manual labour and production costs.
- » Improved Nutrition & Livelihoods: Promotion of nutrition gardens, mushroom consumption, backyard poultry, and duckery enhanced household food security.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Development of women leaders as 'Master Trainers' earning income by training others.
- » Social recognition as President and Secretary of CIWANI Women Farmer Producer Company Limited.
- » Recognized as a role model and torch-bearer for women agripreneurs in Puri district.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Gauripriya's transformative journey has inspired numerous SHGs in neighboring villages to adopt collective farming, value addition, and women-led enterprises. Her model demonstrates that with knowledge, organization, and confidence, rural women can successfully lead agribusinesses, influence institutions, and transform their socio-economic status.



[Source: Sabita Mishra, Bhikari Charan Behera, Arun Kumar Panda and Ananta Sarkar (ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar)]

46. An Inspiring Journey from Homemaker to High-Tech Agripreneur

Profile

Name : Rosalin Das
Age : 38 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 9348435268
Address : Vill- Kulantirasasan, Dist-Khordha, Odisha
Enterprise : Vegetable Farming, Value Addition, Spice-making



Background

Mrs. Rosalin Das is a dynamic, proactive, and always on the lookout for opportunities to grow and improve. But life had her stuck as a housewife, feeling undervalued and financially dependent. This spark within her, ignited a desire to do something more, and she took the leap, joining Tulsi SHG. She started small unit for preparation of wadi making, candles, and incense sticks. Despite meagre returns, she persevered and became the 'President' of Tulsi SHG.

Catalyst of Change

Her visit to ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar sparked a change in her economic journey. She learnt about collective farming, backyard poultry, and mushroom cultivation, and decided to collaborate with ICAR-CIWA. Training and support from ICAR-CIWA enhanced her skills and income. She gained confidence and began to explore new opportunities, inspiring other women to join her. A training was organized for budding women entrepreneurs at ICAR-CIWA on value addition of different agri and dairy food products, its packaging, labelling and marketing which she attended and learnt that the value of her product could rise with proper packaging and labelling. She applied for FSSAI license for further validity of her products to find better shelves for her products in the market.

Pathway to Progress

The FPC, Sishu Ananta, now has 800+ members from 30 villages. Activities include mushroom cultivation, value addition, seed oil extraction, and more. She provides high-yielding seeds, agricultural tools, and machinery through her FPO. Under the NAMO Drone Didi initiative, she became a certified drone pilot, empowering her to provide innovative solutions to farmers.



Highlights:

- » Started Sishu Ananta FPC in December 2022
- » Became Drone Didi in 2023
- » Earned Ujjwala Didi Award & Recognition
- » Annual income of Rs. 6 lakhs and FPC turnover of Rs. 22 lakhs
- » Empowering women farmers through collective action and modern technologies

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

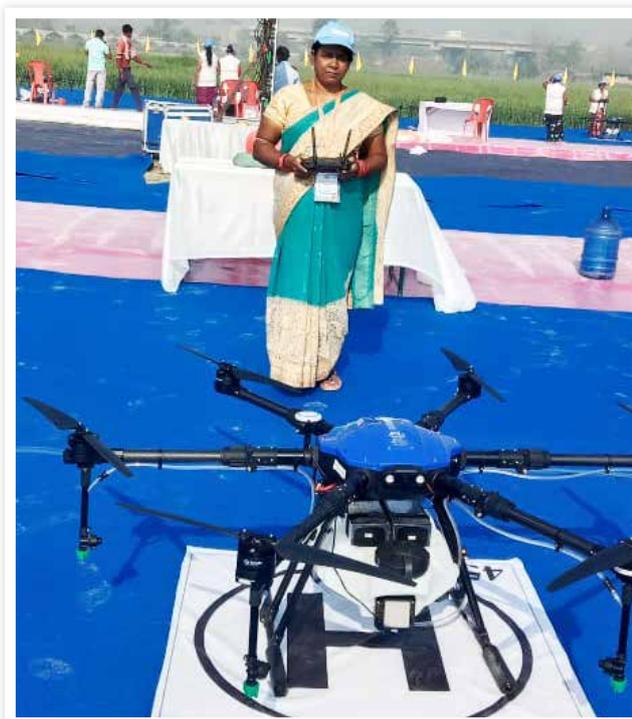
- » Drone Didi
- » Progressive Women Farmer Award
- » MD Sishu Ananta FPC
- » Ujjwala Didi Award by Hon'ble Dy. Chief Minister of Odisha

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Rosalin's leadership inspired women farmers across 30 villages to adopt collective enterprises, modern technologies, and entrepreneurship, improving incomes, confidence, and access to services through SHGs, FPC, and the Custom Hiring Centre. Her work has created a ripple effect, empowering women to take charge of their lives and become entrepreneurs.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Through vegetable cultivation and value-addition activities, she earns an annual income of approximately Rs. 6 lakhs. Owing to her leadership and sustained efforts, the FPC's annual turnover now exceeds Rs. 22 lakhs. Her leadership has inspired women farmers to adopt collective enterprises and modern technologies, improving their income and confidence.



47. Hands-On Value Addition & Processing: Transforming Farm Produce into Market Success

Profile

Name : Asha C S
Age : 44 years
Education : B.Sc. (Botany)
Mobile No : 9946005454
Address : Thalayazham, Kottayam, Kerala
Enterprise : Agri-processing



Background

Mrs. Asha spent most of her earlier years as a homemaker with no source of independent income. Though deeply motivated to support her family financially, her efforts remained confined by limited awareness of scientific farming practices and almost no exposure to value addition, food processing or market opportunities. The absence of technical knowledge, access to training and business guidance restricted her ability to utilize the farm resources productively. With no structured means of generating revenue and rising household expenses, achieving financial security remained a major challenge for her family. Coconut pickle is one among her product which receive much appreciation

Catalyst of Change

In 2023, she contacted KVK and participated in a training programme on value addition and processing of agricultural produce. The training motivated her to explore processing-based entrepreneurship. With continuous technical guidance and motivation from KVK, she gained confidence to start her own value addition unit.

Pathway to Progress

After the training, she established a value addition unit named "Real Food Products." The unit focuses on processing and value addition of locally available produce such as nutmeg and banana. She prepares a variety of products including nutmeg-based products, banana products, coconut-based products, pickles and other traditional food items.



Highlights

- » From Homemaker to Entrepreneur: Smt. Asha's journey from no income to successful agripreneur
- » KVK's Impact: Training and guidance from KVK sparked her entrepreneurship journey
- » Product Range: Nutmeg, banana, coconut products, pickles, and traditional foods
- » Employment: Supports 3 housewives, each earning Rs. 10,000/ month
- » Role Model: Inspires rural women to adopt value addition and entrepreneurship
- » Leadership: Guides fellow women, earns appreciation from institutions and farming community
- » Coconut Pickle: One of her highly appreciated the product

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The enterprise has created employment opportunities for three other housewives, providing them with regular income. At present, each member earns around Rs. 10,000 per month, contributing significantly to their household income. With KVK's guidance, she is steadily expanding production and marketing, and her enterprise now stands as a successful example of women-led agri-based entrepreneurship.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She guides and motivates fellow women, sharing her learning and encouraging them to adopt value addition and entrepreneurship. Her participation in exposure visits, training programmes and local exhibitions has strengthened her leadership role and earned her appreciation from several institutions and the farming community. Today, she stands as a role model for other rural women aspiring to become independent earners and successful agripreneurs.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Asha's success inspires rural women to adopt value addition and agri-based entrepreneurship. She guides and motivates fellow women, sharing her learning and encouraging them to become independent earners



[Source: Elizabeth Joseph & Jayalakshmi G. (KVK, Kottayam, Kerala)]

48. Sown in Crisis, Scaled by Science: Pandemic-Inspired Journey of Women Entrepreneurship

Profile:

Name : Bhagya Sree
Age : 48 years
Education : B.Sc. (Botany); MBA; Trained in Scriptwriting, Film Direction & Digital Media Applications
Mobile No : 95623 32220
Address : Kalleri Bhagam, Karunagappalli, Kollam, Kerala
Enterprise : Bhagya Sree Organic Club;
Type : Agri-processing & Value Addition;
Farmer Collective Development



Background

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mrs. Bhagya Sree witnessed widespread job losses, income insecurity, and livelihood challenges in her community. Motivated by a sense of social responsibility, she turned to agriculture to create meaningful opportunities and strengthen local food systems. She began cultivating arrowroot, turmeric, and banana on 4 acres, facing challenges such as traditional farming practices, low productivity, limited access to modern inputs, lack of market linkages, and social/gender constraints. This highlighted the need for a structured, science-driven, market-oriented approach that could transform primary farming into a sustainable livelihood model benefiting the wider community.

Catalyst of Change

She catalysts for change included KVK Kollam's Value Addition Awareness Programme, which sparked her agri-entrepreneurship journey, and EDP training that enhanced her skills in product diversification, food safety, branding, and marketing. With hands-on guidance from KVK scientists, she received FSSAI registration and organic certification, ensuring market credibility. She formed a Farmer Interest Group, promoting collective action and women-led entrepreneurship, and accessed modern tools and market exposure, boosting efficiency and competitiveness

Pathway to Progress

She has expanded her cultivated area to 10 acres using scientific and organic practices, developing



Highlights

- » From Crisis to Opportunity: Smt. Bhagya Sree turned COVID-19 challenges into agri-business success
- » Organic & Innovative: Cultivates arrowroot, turmeric, banana; creates functional foods, wellness products
- » Women-led Collective: Founder of Farmer Interest Group, promoting collective farming & entrepreneurship
- » Product Range: 28 value-added products, 20 commercialized (arrowroot, turmeric, cosmetic products)
- » Market Reach: 30+ exhibitions, regional & national presence
- » Annual Income: around 6.0 Lakh
- » Empowerment: Mentors women farmers, enhances decision-making, role model in community

- » Recognized as a role model and community leader, inspiring adoption of sustainable agriculture and agri-enterprises.

Influence on Other Farmers

- » Formation of FIG (Chairperson) encouraged collective farming, shared learning, and market access
- » Model is replicable for other women-led rural enterprises, combining production, processing, income generation, and empowerment



28 value-added products, including arrowroot-based treats like chocolate and banana, turmeric-based curcumin powder, and cosmetic formulations like aloe vera soap.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She commercialized 20 products, adopting modern branding, hygiene, and packaging standards. Leveraging digital tools and market linkages, she promoted her products regionally and nationally, participating in 30+ exhibitions across Kerala and other states, gaining market insights and expanding networks.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Mentoring and supporting other women farmers in value addition and entrepreneurship.
- » Decision-making in farm and household enhanced.



[Source: Shamsiya A H. and Bini Sam Sand (KVK, Kollam, Kerala)]

49. Microbiologist to Mushroom Entrepreneur: An Inspiring Agri-Business Journey from Kerala

Profile:

Name	: Lovelin Lukose
Age	: 51 years
Education	: B. Sc. Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT)
Mobile No	: 9048857426
Address	: Pralayil House, Kallara South, Kottayam District, Kerala
Enterprise	: Mushroom Farming



Background

Mrs. Lovelin Lukose, a resident of Kallara in Kottayam district with 30 years of professional experience in Saudi Arabia as microbiologist. A hardworking and family-oriented woman, she aspired to remain economically active after returning home by applying her scientific knowledge in a practical enterprise. She identified mushroom cultivation as a promising agri-entrepreneurial opportunity, but required systematic training and exposure to agricultural entrepreneurship to establish a sustainable venture.

Catalyst of Change

Mrs. Lovelin Lukose underwent training on mushroom cultivation conducted by KVK as part of the Mushroom Village Programme of Kaduthuruthy Block, which provided her with practical knowledge on mushroom production, bed management, and value addition.

Pathway to Progress

Mrs. currently markets the mushroom under the brand name "Mariabelle Mushroom Agrotech". Drawing on her microbiology background, she adopted sterile techniques and quality control measures in mushroom spawn production, ensuring reliable and high-quality inputs for cultivation.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

In addition to fresh mushroom sales, she has diversified into value-added mushroom products, including nutrient-rich mushroom chammanthippodi, mushroom rice balls, mushroom appam, and mushroom cakes, catering to health-conscious consumers and enhancing profitability. Her future plan includes the production of mushroom powder, aimed at increasing shelf life, expanding market



Highlights

- » Microbiologist turned Agripreneur: Ms. Lovelin Lukose leverages her scientific background in mushroom cultivation
- » Value-added Products: Mushroom chammanthippodi, rice balls, appam, cakes, and plans for mushroom powder
- » Monthly Income: Rs. 50,000
- » Empowered Decision-Maker: Strengthened role in family and enterprise
- » Role Model: Inspires women to build successful agri-enterprises, sharing expertise and experience

she has become a visible and reliable source of inspiration—demonstrating that women can build successful agricultural enterprises at any stage of life and lead others toward new opportunities.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Lovelin Lukose's success in mushroom cultivation and value-added products inspires other women to explore agri-entrepreneurship. She motivates and guides them, sharing her expertise and demonstrating that women can build successful agricultural enterprises at any stage of life.

reach, and promoting mushrooms as a functional food ingredient. She is earning Rs. 50,000 per month.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Lovelin Lukose's venture has not only secured her livelihood but also strengthened her role as a confident decision-maker in her family and enterprise. Her initiative has earned her recognition in the community, where she motivates and guides other women interested in mushroom cultivation. Through active participation in trainings and farmer networks,



[Source: Smitha Revi & Jayalakshmi G, ICAR- (KVK, Kottayam, Kerala)]

50. Dependence to Self-Reliance: Successful Journey of Mushroom Entrepreneur

Profile

Name	: Mini Wilson
Age	: 47 years
Education	: PDC, General Nursing
Mobile No	: 9207933719
Address	: Ponnankara, Thiruvambady Panchayat, Kozhikode District, Kerala
Enterprise	: Mushroom Spawn Production, Oyster Mushroom Cultivation and Integrated Farming



Background

Mrs. Mini Wilson had been supporting her husband in agricultural activities while seeking an independent and sustainable source of income for her family. Although she had been practicing oyster mushroom cultivation for nearly seven years, the high cost and irregular availability of quality mushroom spawn limited expansion and profitability of the enterprise.

Catalyst of Change

She attended the Mushroom Spawn Production Training Programme conducted by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kozhikode, in August 2022. The training equipped her with technical knowledge on low-cost spawn production and scientific practices, enabling her to establish a home-based mushroom spawn production unit

Pathway to Progress

She adopted low-cost mushroom spawn production technology and expanded mushroom cultivation from 300 beds to 2,000–3,000 beds. In addition to mushroom cultivation, Mini Wilson follows an integrated farming system involving the production and sale of lotus and lily tubers, beekeeping as an additional source of income, rearing of layer chicks, and edible fish culture mainly for household consumption. She also cultivates multiple mushroom varieties including yellow, pink, and blue oyster mushrooms, Lion's Mane, King Oyster, and Sajor Caju. Besides mushroom spawn, she markets ready-to-fruit mushroom beds, fresh mushrooms, and value-added mushroom and jackfruit products, all under the brand name 'DINA'S'. She also runs a YouTube channel, Mini's World, through



Highlights

- » From Dependence to Self-Reliance: Mini Wilson mastered mushroom spawn production, reducing costs and boosting profitability
- » Integrated Farming: Mushrooms, lotus, lily, beekeeping, layer chicks, and fish culture
- » Value-added Products: Ready-to-fruit beds, fresh mushrooms, mushroom and jackfruit products under 'DINA'S'
- » Annual INCOME: 13 Lakh
- » Digital Presence: YouTube channel, Mini's World, showcases her farming activities
- » Awards & Recognition: Best Farmer Award 2023, master trainer in mushroom cultivation

which she shares and popularizes her farming activities.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The intervention enabled Mini Wilson to become self-reliant in mushroom spawn production, reducing dependency on external sources and lowering production costs. The enterprise has generated additional income and employment at the household level.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She was awarded the Best Farmer Award by Thiruvambady Grama Panchayat in 2023. Mini is frequently invited as a master trainer to share her experiences in mushroom cultivation training programmes. Her success has motivated several women farmers to adopt mushroom-based enterprises and integrated farming systems.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Mini Wilson's success in mushroom cultivation and integrated farming motivates women farmers to adopt mushroom-based enterprises and sustainable practices. She shares her expertise as a master trainer, inspiring others to explore agri-entrepreneurship.



[Source: KK Aiswarya, and P. Ratha Krishnan (KVK, Kozhikode, Kerala)]

51. Scientific Value Addition of Jackfruit as a Scalable Agripreneurship Model for Economic Empowerment

Profile

Name : Nicemol Sunny
Age : 60 years
Education : Degree with PG Diploma
Mobile No : 9884024757
Address : Amalagiri, Kottayam district, Kerala
Enterprise : Agro processing and Value addition



Background

Mrs. Nicemol Sunny aspired to establish a sustainable agri-based enterprise utilizing locally available resources. Although jackfruit was abundantly available, it was largely underutilized or wasted due to lack of scientific processing knowledge and assured markets. Prior to intervention, she had limited exposure to standardized processing methods, food safety norms and organized marketing strategies, which restricted her ability to convert jackfruit into a profitable venture.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point in her entrepreneurial journey was her participation in hands-on training programmes at the State Resource Centre for Jackfruit, ICAR-KVK Pathanamthitta. The training provided practical exposure in jackfruit dehydration, value addition, quality control, hygiene standards, packaging, branding and basic entrepreneurship. This structured capacity-building support not only enhanced her technical skills but also instilled confidence to take up entrepreneurship as a full-fledged livelihood option.

Pathway to Progress

Through systematic training received from the State Resource Centre for Jackfruit, ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra Pathanamthitta, Mrs. Nicemol Sunny adopted scientific dehydration and processing techniques that significantly improved product recovery, shelf life and consistency. Efficient utilization of raw jackfruit, seeds and bulbs minimized wastage and enabled year-round production. The introduction of standardized processing protocols ensured uniform quality across batches, enhancing overall productivity of the enterprise.



Highlights

- » Scientific jackfruit value addition training from ICAR–Krishi Vigyan Kendra Pathanamthitta
- » Women-led enterprise based on underutilized jackfruit
- » Diversified, health-oriented value-added products
- » Annual turnover up to Rs. 25 lakh
- » Strong replication and empowerment impact

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Value addition transformed low-value, seasonal jackfruit into premium, shelf-stable products with high market demand. The enterprise achieved an annual turnover exceeding ₹25 lakh during its growth phase, demonstrating strong economic viability. In the current year, diversification into dehydrated *Garcinia cambogia* added a new revenue stream and resulted in a turnover of about Rs. 15 lakh. Reduced post-harvest losses, better price realization and access to national markets through e-commerce platforms contributed to sustained income enhancement.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The success of Korah's Agro Foods brought about significant personal empowerment for Mrs. Nicemol Sunny by enhancing her confidence, decision-making ability and social recognition. As a woman entrepreneur, she emerged as a role model within her community, demonstrating that agri-based enterprises can provide financial independence and dignity of work. Her journey reflects the broader social impact of capacity-building programmes in enabling women to take leadership roles in agribusiness.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Nicemol Sunny's success has had a strong demonstration effect on fellow farmers and aspiring women entrepreneurs. Her enterprise showcased the economic potential of value addition in jackfruit, a crop often neglected or wasted. Many trainees and local women have been motivated to adopt jackfruit processing and small-scale food enterprises after interacting with her and learning from her experience. Her journey stands as a practical example of how scientific training, institutional support and entrepreneurial vision can convert a locally available resource into a profitable, scalable and inspiring agribusiness model.



52. Millets to Multiple Enterprises: The Inspiring Journey of a Rural Woman Agripreneur from Karnataka

Profile

Name : Padmini Gowda
Age : 49 years
Education : SSLC
Mobile No : 9964849999
Address : Vill. Kenchiganahalli, Madhure Hobli, Doddaballapur Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, Karnataka
Enterprise : Millet value addition, agri-processing, mushroom production, oil extraction, poultry, vermicomposting and eco-friendly products



Background

Mrs. Padmini Gowda belongs to an agrarian family and was engaged in traditional farming practices with limited income opportunities. Despite having agricultural experience, her activities were confined to primary production with minimal value addition. Challenges included low profitability, lack of technical knowledge on processing and marketing, limited exposure to licensing, branding and packaging, and restricted access to organized markets. Like many rural women, she also faced social and economic constraints in scaling up her enterprise independently.

Catalyst of Change

Padmini Gowda's journey took a significant turn when she joined KVK, gaining hands-on training in millet value addition, agri-processing, and packaging. With KVK's support, she built capacity, received technical guidance, and accessed market linkages, transforming from a conventional farmer to a confident agripreneur.

Pathway to Progress

Pathway to progress involves innovations like millet-based value addition, mushroom production, oil extraction, and spice processing, adopting sustainable practices like vermicomposting, and utilizing by-products for extra income. Padmini Gowda's multiple enterprises have significantly boosted her household income, with value-added millet products enhancing profitability. She's reduced



Highlight

- » From Tradition to Innovation: Smt. Padmini Gowda transformed from a traditional farmer to a confident agripreneur
- » Diversified Income Streams: Millet value addition, mushroom production, oil extraction, spice processing, and more
- » Annual Income: Substantial earnings from Milky Mushroom, wood-pressed oils, eggs, vermicompost, and more (Rs. 23.60 lakh)
- » Empowered & Recognized: Progressive Farm Woman 2025, Best Farmer Award 2025, and community leader
- » Inspiring Others: Motivated 20 farm women to adopt millet value addition, engaging two as business partners

addition, and engaging two as business partners. With improved decision-making roles and community respect, she's a respected role model

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Padmini Gowda's success has motivated several rural women and farmers to adopt processing and allied agri-enterprises. Her willingness to share knowledge and mentor others has created a ripple effect, encouraging sustainable livelihoods and women-led entrepreneurship in the region.

dependence on single crops, generating employment for herself and other women, while promoting nutritious millet-based foods that improve household nutrition.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She collectively involves rural women, driving diversified income streams: Milky Mushroom (Rs. 7,20,000), wood-pressed oils (Rs. 6,48,000), BV-380 eggs (Rs. 4,80,000), vermicompost (Rs. 4,40,000), areca leaf plates (Rs. 1,20,000), and spices & millet products (Rs. 1,52,680), generating substantial annual income and resilient livelihoods.

Social & Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Padmini Gowda's achievements have earned her numerous accolades, including Progressive Farm Woman 2025, District Level Millets Recipe Contest 2024, and the Can Bank Best Farmer Award 2025. She's emerged as a successful agripreneur and community leader, inspiring 20 farm women to adopt millet value



[Source: Hanumantharaya B. G, Gopika S Muttagi, Gopal, Y.M and Supriya, S. (KVK, Bengaluru Rural, Karnataka)]

53. Skill to Success: Transforming Training into a Thriving Mushroom Enterprise in Kerala

Profile

Name : Praseetha K.
Age : 33 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9847894627
Address : Vill. Parothumneer, Kannur district, Kerala,
Enterprise : Mushroom Farming and Value Addition



Background

Mrs. Praseetha initially followed traditional mushroom cultivation practices with limited technical knowledge, resulting in low productivity and irregular income. Lack of awareness about scientific production methods and value addition restricted her ability to scale up the enterprise. Limited access to improved technology, organized markets, and institutional support further constrained income generation. Additionally, as a homemaker, social and gender-related constraints limited her exposure to training opportunities and market linkages during the initial stages.

Catalyst of Change

With a clear plan to achieve financial independence, Smt. Praseetha approached KVK Kannur for technical guidance and support. She received skill development training on scientific mushroom cultivation under the SCSP programme during 2024, along with capacity building in mushroom value addition. Based on the training, she adopted improved production practices such as scientific bed preparation, hygiene management, and staggered production for regular income. Institutional support from ICAR-KVK Kannur enabled access to quality inputs, technical backstopping, and market-oriented production strategies.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted scientific mushroom cultivation practices using improved quality spawn and standardized bed preparation techniques, ensuring higher productivity and consistent yields. To enhance income, she diversified into value addition and processing, introducing products such as mushroom pickle, mushroom cake, mushroom biriyani, mushroom chilli, and mushroom cutlet, marketed under her own brand, Kunjatta Mushrooms. Local market linkages were utilized to promote



Highlights

- » A homemaker from Kannur became a successful mushroom entrepreneur after training from ICAR–KVK Kannur under SCSP in 2024.
- » She scaled up production from 2 to 500 mushroom beds, achieving a daily yield of around 12kg.
- » Diversified into value-added products like mushroom pickle, cake, biriyani, chilli, and cutlet, marketed under her brand 'Kunjatta Mushrooms', earning an annual income of Rs. 2.5–3.0 lakhs.
- » Provides full-time and part-time employment and serves as a role model for other women farmers in the locality.

products and expand sales channels.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Praseetha after the adoption of scientific mushroom cultivation practices increased the production of mushrooms compared to the initial traditional practices. The enterprise led to a substantial improvement in income, with annual earnings rising to Rs. 2.5–3.0 lakhs, indicating an income increase of approximately Rs. 2.7 lakhs per year. Improved crop management and standardized production practices helped reduce drudgery and crop losses, leading to nearly 15 percentage reduction in cost of production. Regular availability and consumption of mushrooms enhanced household nutrition and dietary diversity, contributing to improved food and nutritional security. The mushroom enterprise also ensured full-time self-employment for the beneficiary and generated part-time employment for 1–2 additional persons, thereby strengthening livelihoods at the household level.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The successful establishment of the mushroom enterprise has significantly enhanced her social and personal empowerment. She now plays an active role in household and farm-level decision-making and has gained increased recognition and respect within her family and the local community. By sharing her experiences and knowledge, she has begun mentoring other women farmers interested in mushroom cultivation and value addition. Her entrepreneurial success has positioned her as a role model for aspiring women farmers in the area, encouraging them to adopt income-generating activities. She actively participates in community interactions and SHG-related activities, demonstrating leadership qualities and contributing to collective learning and women's empowerment at the grassroots level.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her success in mushroom cultivation has created a strong positive influence on other farmers, particularly women, in the locality. Seeing her transition from a homemaker to a successful entrepreneur has motivated several farmers to approach ICAR–KVK Kannur for training and technical guidance in mushroom cultivation. She frequently shares her practical experiences with fellow farmers and encourages them to adopt scientific practices and value addition for improved income. Her enterprise has thus served as a demonstration unit, inspiring others to take up mushroom cultivation as a viable livelihood option.



[Source: Meera Manjusha A.V. and Saniga N.S. (KVK, Kannur, Kerala)]

54. Innovative effort of Woman Entrepreneur for Healthy Millet Snacking

Profile

Name : Pushpalatha K.S.
Age : 46 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9380574994
Address : Tumakuru, Karnataka
Enterprise : Millet-based enterprise



Background

Mrs. Pushpalatha, a homemaker, turned her passion for healthy cooking into a business venture, launching 'Priya Daily' in 2022. With her family's support, she created a range of millet-based products like ready-to-eat roasted millet bytes, flakes, roti, laddu, and nippattu, catering to modern lifestyles. Her products are maida-free, preservative-free, gluten-free, and roasted, not deep-fried, making them a hit among health-conscious families, working professionals, children, and senior citizens.

Catalyst of Change

A major milestone in her entrepreneurial journey was the technical guidance she received from ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Hirehalli, Tumakuru. The KVK team helped her gain valuable knowledge on food processing, quality improvement, hygiene, and standardization, giving her the confidence to scale up her business.

Pathway to Progress

With KVK-Hirehalli's support, Mrs. Pushpalatha participated in several state and national-level exhibitions, showcasing her products and winning awards. She won third prize at Krishi Mela-2024, organized by UAS, Bengaluru, and first place in the district-level millet recipes competition, organized by the State Department of Agriculture, Tumakuru. Her products are now sold across multiple states, spreading awareness about healthy millet snacking.



Highlights

- » Millet Maven: Ms. Pushpalatha launched 'Priya Daily' in 2022, creating healthy millet-based products
- » Awards & Recognition: Won third prize at Krishi Mela-2024 and first place in district-level millet recipes competition
- » Global Reach: Exporting products to the USA, with FDA license secured
- » Income Growth: Annual income grew from Rs. 3.0 lakhs to nearly twofold
- » Women's Empowerment: Created employment opportunities for two women, promoting sustainable growth and women's empowerment
- » Inspiring Others: A role model for women entrepreneurs, rural start-ups, and millet-based food enterprises

Honourable Home Minister of Karnataka. She's emerged as a successful woman entrepreneur, inspiring others with her story. Her family's support and her own determination have made 'Priya Daily' a trusted brand.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Pushpalatha's success story inspires women entrepreneurs, rural start-ups, and millet-based food enterprises. Her journey demonstrates that with determination, family support, and scientific guidance, a modest initiative can evolve into a nationally recognized enterprise, promoting sustainable growth and women's empowerment.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her annual income grew from Rs. 3.0 lakhs to nearly twofold, creating employment opportunities for two women. To meet growing demand, she expanded her production and marketing activities. An NRI from the USA initiated the export process, and she secured an FDA license to export her products to the USA.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her achievements earned her recognition and awards, including a Rs. 5,000 cash award from the



PRIYA DAILY
A Step Towards Healthy Millet Snacking...

Our Healthy & Tasty Creations

1. Ready to Eat Roasted Millet Rotties
2. Roasted Millet Nippattu
3. Mixed Millet Flakes Chivada
4. Korn OG – The Corn Snack
5. Ragi Mixture
6. Millet Laddus
7. Chatni Powder
8. Authentic Sambar & Masala Powders

Why Choose Priya Daily?

- Made from 100% Natural Ingredients
- No Maida, No Preservatives
- Roasted – Not Fried
- Healthy, Tasty, and Travel-Friendly
- Proudly Made in Tumakuru

Priya Daily
A Step Towards Healthy Millet Snacking

Tumakuru ☎ 9380574994



[Source: K.N. Jagadish, N. Loganandhan, and Radha R. Banakar (KVK, Tumakuru-II, Karnataka)]

55. Enhancing Livelihood in Karnataka through Food Processing Enterprise

Profile

Name : Shamala Ellaraddi Karur
Age : 43 years
Education : SSLC
Mobile No : 7795562984
Address : Vill. Binkadakatti, Gadag, Karnataka
Enterprise : Chilli & Turmeric powders and crisp roties



Background

Mrs. Shamala Karur has been looking after SHGs, organized by KSRLPS under NRLM for the last 7 years. She works as Main Book Keeper (MBK) at her own village and looking after 20 SHGs. Her husband supplies newspapers to families and he owns 2 acres of dryland. The income they got from both works was not sufficient to meet the livelihood needs of the family as her son is a handicapped. Meanwhile, during her free time, she used to prepare ethnic sweets and marketing through exhibitions and local consumers.

Catalyst of Change

Her entrepreneurial journey took off when she attended a training program at KVK, Hulkoti, under NRLM. Selected as an entrepreneur, she learned to create value-added chilli products, and gained skills in packing, labeling, licensing, and marketing. KVK supported her with FSSAI licensing, packaging materials, label design, and marketing, transforming her chilli farming into a thriving business.

Pathway to Progress

Her entrepreneurial spirit led her to market chilli products through KVK outlets, local shops, and exhibitions. She diversified into turmeric powder and other products using a small flour mill, boosting her income by Rs. 40,000-50,000/-. Unsatisfied, she added roti-making and dough mixing machines, earning Rs. 10,000-20,000/month, and employing two women. Her net income now stands at Rs. 4-5 lakhs/annum. With family support and KVK's guidance, she's exploring Foxtail Millet roti, taking her business to new heights.



Highlights

- » Value addition: Value addition in ODOP crop of Gadag district Byadagi Chilli
- » Market Linkages: KVK Sales Unit, off-shoot marketing avenues, exhibition, family members' involvement
- » Business expansion: Under PMFME- Established Roti making unit
- » Community impact: Inspiring and empowering women SHGs, gave employment to two women
- » Income: Earning Rs.4000 to 4.0 lakhs per annum by making chilli products, turmeric powder and varieties of crisp roties.
- » Award: Received best women entrepreneur award from ICAR-KVK, Hulkoti & KSDA, Gadag

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The income expenditure data reveals a steady growth in production and net income from 2022-23 to 2024-25. The production of Red Chilli powder increased from 2 qtls in 2022-23 to 3.5 qtls in 2024-25, with a corresponding increase in net income from Rs. 40,000 to 70,000. Similarly, Masala Chilli powder production rose from 0.25 qtls to 0.6 qtls, with net income increasing from Rs. 3,750 to 12,000. The introduction of MSP Rotties in 2024-25 generated an additional Rs. 1,50,000 in net income, showcasing diversification and growth in the business.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She is a Main Book Keeper (MBK) for 20 SHGs, along with this she is mentoring all SHG women and supporting for their socio-economic

empowerment. She leads group for exposure visits to KVK, SAUs to impart knowledge, skills and attitude towards micro-enterprises.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Shamala's success has inspired and empowered SHG women and farmers in her village. As a Main Book Keeper and mentor, she guides them towards socio-economic empowerment. Her leadership and exposure visits to KVK and SAUs encourage others to adopt micro-enterprises, promoting entrepreneurship and growth in the community.



[Source: Sudha V. Mankani and Vinayaka H. Niranjana, (KVK, Gadag, Karnataka)]

56. Bougainvillea-based Entrepreneurship: A Road to Success

Profile

Name : Simi A J
Age : 45 years
Education : SSLC
Mobile No : 7907694884
Address : Ramla Manzil, Kallode, Kuttichal,
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
Enterprise : Crop-based enterprises



Background

Mrs. Simi is a progressive, enthusiastic, and hardworking woman farmer. Owing to financial constraints, she initially took up cultivation and marketing of crops to support her family. Her farming journey began on her terrace, where she cultivated a wide range of vegetables and fruit plants. Limited access to resources posed a major challenge during the initial phase.

These experiences inspired her to expand her vision, leading her to initiate the collection and multiplication of nearly 250 varieties of Bougainvillea. Encouraged by a strong market response, she began sourcing rare Bougainvillea varieties and gradually scaled up the production of planting materials to meet increasing demand. Throughout this phase, limited resources continued to be a significant constraint, which she addressed through innovation and perseverance.

Catalyst of Change

She actively participated in trainings, seminars, workshops, conferences, and other technology dissemination programmes organized by ICAR Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Mitraniketan Thiruvananthapuram, where she received continuous technical guidance on improved agricultural practices. She also became a beneficiary of the Swachhta Action Plan, under which she started producing vermicompost with support from KVK. This sustained technical and institutional support boosted her confidence, enabling her to expand crop cultivation further and establish a shop dealing in agricultural inputs and nursery plants. With consistent market demand, she intensified the collection of rare Bougainvillea varieties and scaled up the multiplication of planting materials to cater to customer needs.



Highlights

- » Floral Maven: Mrs. Simi A.J. cultivates and markets 250+ Bougainvillea varieties
- » Awards Galore: State-level Best Farmer Award, Best Women Farmer Award, Kerala Kaumudi Best Farmer Award, and more
- » Entrepreneurial Success: Initial investment Rs. 1.75 lakhs, net income Rs. 2.02 lakhs/year
- » Inspiring Others: Resource person for KVKs and Agriculture Department, motivates fellow women farmers
- » Employment Generator: Created jobs for two farm women
- » Global Recognition: Attracts visitors from across the country and abroad

Pathway to Progress

Her success can be attributed to the adoption of improved crop varieties along with climate-smart and sustainable agricultural practices. Continuous learning, application of scientific methods, and effective scaling strategies with the back-up Thiruvananthapuram KVK played a crucial role in her entrepreneurial growth.

Productivity & Income Enhancement:

Initial investment (collection of rare varieties, transportation, pots, and presentation): Rs. 1,75,000/-
 Average price per plant per year: Rs. 275/-
 Average number of plants sold per year: 1,374
 Gross income: Rs. 3,77,850/-
 Net income: Rs. 2,02,850/-

She currently produces and markets nearly 250 Bougainvillea varieties collected from different regions. She has been invited as a resource person by KVKs and the Agriculture Department for various training programmes, where she motivates and inspires fellow

women farmers. With continued guidance from KVK, she markets her collections at several agricultural melas held across different locations. To strengthen production and marketing activities, she has also generated employment opportunities for two farm women.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Outstanding achievements of Mrs. Simi have been recognized through several prestigious awards, including the State-level Best Farmer Award (2018), Best Women Farmer Award from ATMA (2018), Kerala Kaumudi Best Farmer Award (2019), Best Tuber Crop Farmer Award from ICAR-CTCRI (2020), Best Agripreneur Award from ICAR-KVK Trivandrum (2022), and the Millionaire Award (2025).

Influence on Other Farmers

She has emerged as a source of inspiration, attracting visits from students, teachers, and researchers from across the country and abroad. Her dedication, innovative mindset, and resilience in overcoming challenges have established her as a true role model within the agricultural community.



[Source: Chithra G. and Jyothi Rachel Varghese (KVK, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala)]

57. Turning Passion into Profit through Home-made Agri-processing Enterprise

Profile

Name : Sindhu Joseph
Age : 36 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9562662581
Address : Vill. Chengalayi, Kannur District, Kerala
Enterprise : Home-based agri-processing enterprise, producing handmade herbal soaps in the brand "Flory Organic"



Background

Mrs. Sindhu, a homemaker faced limited avenues for financial independence, particularly during the COVID-19 lockdown. She lacked formal training in soap making, access to modern techniques, markets, and resources, and initially relied on traditional methods for livelihood. Low productivity and small-scale home-based production restricted income generation. Social and gender-related constraints also limited her opportunities to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Catalyst of Change

Mrs. Sindhu approached KVK Kannur and underwent skill development training on nursery management, gardening, landscaping, and scientific soap making. She adopted modern methods for producing handmade herbal soaps, learned to cultivate and use ingredients such as coffee, turmeric, papaya, beetroot, fenugreek, and lotus, and gained knowledge about hygiene, quality control, and systematic production. Institutional guidance and program support also helped her access inputs, improve techniques, and understand market requirements.

Pathway to Progress

Mrs. Sindhu started as a small kitchen project and scaled up her enterprise to produce a diverse range of herbal soaps. She maintains over 50 lotus pots and cultivates most of the raw ingredients in her homestead to reduce dependence on external sources. She implemented value addition and branding strategies, producing high-quality products and marketing them through shops, offices, malls, and other outlets. Her organized, systematic production methods have increased efficiency,



Highlights

- » Transformed from homemaker to successful herbal soap entrepreneur through KVK Kannur training.
- » Produces and markets a variety of handmade soaps using homegrown herbs and flowers.
- » Generates income and provides employment, serving as a role model for other women farmers.

improved product quality, and generated an annual income of around ₹1 lakh, demonstrating the economic viability of home-based agri-processing ventures.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She has significantly enhanced productivity and income through her systematic and scientific approach to handmade herbal soap production. By cultivating most of the floriculture and crop ingredients in her homestead, she has reduced dependence on external inputs, lowered the cost of production, and improved efficiency. Her organized production methods have increased output, enabling her to generate an annual

income of approximately Rs. 1 lakh.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has gained recognition and respect in her family and community, enhanced her decision-making role, and become a role model for other women farmers. She mentors other women interested in soap making and homestead-based agri-processing, inspiring them to achieve financial independence and self-reliance. Her innovative approach and dedication have earned her appreciation as a successful rural entrepreneur.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Sindhu motivates other women in the locality to adopt home-based value-added enterprises and integrate homestead crop cultivation with processing for higher income. By demonstrating the benefits of scientific methods, sustainable practices, and product diversification, she encourages fellow farmers to enhance productivity, quality, and marketability of their own enterprises.



[Source: Meera Manjusha A.V. and Saniga N.S., (KVK, Kannur, Kerala)]

58. Fallen Jackfruit to Flourishing Fortune: Successfull Value Addition Enterprise in Kerala

Profile

Name : Sini Rachel Mathew
Age : 38 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9188104704
Address : Ranny, Pathanamthitta district, Kerala
Enterprise : Agri-processing – value addition of jackfruit



Background

Pathanamthitta district is characterised by abundant availability of jackfruit, most of which remains underutilised or wasted due to lack of organised processing facilities and market-driven value addition. Recognising this opportunity, Mrs. Sini Rachel Mathew initiated a small-scale jackfruit processing unit with a processing area of about 100 sq. ft. The enterprise produced jackfruit halwa, varatti, chips, pickles and chutney powders using locally sourced raw materials.

Despite the availability of raw material and consumer demand, the enterprise faced several constraints. Processing activities were carried out using non-standardised methods, resulting in inconsistency in quality and shelf life. Limited infrastructure, inadequate packaging and branding facilities and weak market linkage restricted the expansion of the enterprise. Marketing was largely confined to local exhibitions and small-scale digital platforms. Due to these limitations, the enterprise could generate only a gross income of Rs. 4.00 lakh per annum with a net income of Rs. 40,000, making it difficult to scale up the activity into a sustainable livelihood option.

Catalyst of Change

In the year 2023, Mrs. Sini established institutional linkage with ICAR–Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Pathanamthitta and enrolled under the ARYA Project. Through the project, she received systematic capacity-building support in jackfruit processing, value addition, food safety standards, quality improvement, packaging, branding and marketing. The intervention focused not only on skill enhancement but also on strengthening entrepreneurial competencies. Continuous technical guidance, regular follow-up and handholding support were provided by KVK scientists to ensure adoption of scientific processing practices and compliance with food safety norms. Support was also extended for branding and market linkage to improve visibility and consumer acceptance of the products.



Highlights:

- » Jackfruit Journey: Mrs. Sini Rachel Mathew turned waste into wealth with jackfruit processing
- » 10x Growth: Gross income jumped from Rs. 4 lakhs to 40 lakhs per year with a net income of Rs. 4.00 lakh
- » Empowering Women: Created jobs for 14 local women in processing, packaging, and marketing
- » Inspiring Role Model: Successful entrepreneur, mentor, and motivator for rural youth and women
- » Scientific Approach: Adopted improved processing tech, hygienic practices, and digital marketing
- » Market Expansion: Products now on Amazon, ICAR-KVK outlets, and more

Pathway to Progress

With the introduction of improved processing technologies, the entrepreneur adopted hygienic handling practices, standardised recipes and improved frying and drying techniques, which significantly enhanced product quality, uniformity and shelf life. Improved packaging methods and branding further strengthened market appeal. The enterprise diversified its product range and adopted digital marketing strategies to expand market outreach.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

As a result of these interventions, the processing area was expanded from 100 sq. ft. to 320 sq. ft., leading to a substantial increase in production capacity. Market linkage was strengthened through organised channels, including Amazon, ICAR-KVK outlets, exhibitions and digital platforms. The enterprise currently records a gross income of Rs. 40.00 lakh per annum with a net income of Rs. 4.00 lakh, reflecting a tenfold increase in

profitability compared to the pre-intervention period. In addition, the enterprise has generated regular and seasonal employment opportunities for 14 local women in processing, packaging and marketing activities.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The success of the enterprise has significantly enhanced the entrepreneur's confidence, decision-making ability and economic independence. She has gained social recognition as a successful women entrepreneur and has emerged as a role model for women and rural youth in the district. Through formal and informal interactions, exposure visits and training programmes organised by KVK, she actively shares her experiences and mentors aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly women interested in value addition of underutilised crops.

Influence on Other Farmers

The enterprise has served as a live demonstration model showcasing the economic viability of jackfruit value addition when scientific processing, branding and market linkage are adopted. The success story has inspired several women and rural youth to explore agri-processing enterprises, contributing to horizontal spread of value addition activities in the district and reinforcing the role of women in agri-food system transformation.



[Source: C.P. Robert, Shana Harshan and Sindhu Sadanandan (KVK, Pathanamthitta, Kerala)]

59. Crafting Profits from Cashew: A Story of Home-Based Entrepreneurship from Kerala

Profile

Name : Sushma K. V.
Age : 41 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 7034508078
Address : Valakkai, Chengalai Panchayat,
Kannur district, Kerala
Enterprise : Cashew apple value addition



Background

Mrs. Sushma K. V. faced limited opportunities for income generation and lacked technical knowledge and resources to process cashew apples. Traditional practices in cashew cultivation and value addition were not widely known in her area, resulting in low productivity and income. Social and gender-related constraints, limited access to credit, technology, and markets further restricted her ability to convert her skills into a sustainable enterprise.

Catalyst of Change

Mrs. Sushma K. V. participated in training programmes on cashew apple value addition conducted by KVK Kannur under the ICAR-ARYA Project, which strengthened her interest in income-generating activities. With technical and financial support from KVK Kannur, she established a cashew apple processing unit. The training equipped her with knowledge of hygiene, quality control, processing techniques, and market strategies, enabling her to implement modern and systematic production practices.

Pathway to Progress

She launched her products under the brand 'Nutriproducts' in March 2023 and further expanded her enterprise in 2025 to produce cashew apple syrup-based drinks and tender coconut drinks under the brand 'Kaze Cool'. She sources raw cashew apples from nearby plantations and applies value addition and branding strategies to enhance marketability. Her organized and systematic production practices have enabled her to scale operations and reach customers through Kudumbashree and local shops, demonstrating entrepreneurial success and market linkages.



Highlights

- » Established a new cashew value-addition unit to diversify products and scale up the enterprise.
- » Launched “Kaze Cool” coconut- and cashew-based drinks, adding market value to local produce.
- » Enhanced income and employment opportunities through agri-processing and branding.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She currently produces and sells over 500 bottles of cashew syrup and 250 packets of cashew candy per season, with a production capacity of 150 litres of syrup and 25 kg of candy. She earns a gross income of over Rs. 70,000 per season and an annual net income exceeding Rs. 60,000. By cultivating value-added products and efficiently sourcing raw materials, she has reduced production costs, improved productivity, and created self-employment for herself while generating part-time employment opportunities for others.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has gained recognition in her family and community for her entrepreneurial initiative. She has enhanced her decision-making role, serves as a role model for other women farmers, and mentors fellow women interested in value-added agri-processing. Her innovative approach, persistence, and success in establishing a home-based enterprise have earned her respect and visibility in the local community.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Sushma K. V. inspires other women and farmers in the region to engage in value addition and home-based processing enterprises, showing how traditional crops like cashew can be transformed into profitable businesses. Her success demonstrates the importance of training, technical support, and market linkages in improving livelihoods and generating sustainable income.



[Source: Meera Manjusha, A.V. and Saniga N.S. (KVK, Kannur, Kerala)]

60. Growing Income through Green Entrepreneurship

Profile

Name	: Aasiya Akbar
Age	: 34 years
Education	: 9th standard
Mobile No	: 6005084139
Address	: Nusoo, Bandipora-193502
Enterprise	: Vegetable seedlings & Mushroom cultivation



Background

Mrs. Aasiya, a homemaker had a strong interest in agriculture and aspired to contribute economically to her household. However, the absence of cultivable land posed a major limitation. To overcome this constraint, she explored the possibility of adopting agriculture-based enterprises within the limited space available at her residence. Initial challenges included lack of technical knowledge regarding crop selection, nutrient management, irrigation, and protection from adverse weather conditions. Despite these challenges including socio-cultural hindrances, her sustained motivation encouraged her to continue and seek scientific guidance from KVK.

Catalyst of Change

She approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bandipora in 2020. Recognizing her potential, KVK extended comprehensive technical backstopping and capacity-building support, particularly in vegetable seedling production. The key extension interventions provided to her included:

- » Structured training programmes on terrace gardening and protected cultivation techniques
- » Hands-on method demonstrations on scientific nursery raising using pots and pro-trays
- » Exposure visits to successful agri-entrepreneurial units for experiential learning
- » Skill-based training on button mushroom cultivation to diversify income sources

Pathway to Progress

With improved skills and scientific knowledge, Aasiya established a well-managed terrace garden and started raising quality vegetable seedlings in pots and trays in the year 2021. She started seedling production in the year 2022 and it emerged as a major income-generating activity, with increasing demand from local farmers. To further diversify her income, she utilized a vacant room in her house to initiate button mushroom cultivation in the year 2023. She initially started in 2023 with 100 mushroom bags and, based on encouraging returns and continued technical guidance from KVK, expanded the unit to 300 bags by the year 2024. An important innovative aspect of her enterprise was the recycling



Highlights:

- » From Limitations to Growth: Aasiya turned her home into a thriving agri-enterprise
- » Breaking Barriers: Overcame lack of land, technical knowledge, and social constraints
- » Income Boom: Earnings jumped from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 1.60 lakh (seedling production) and Rs. 0.30 lakh to Rs. 0.70 lakh (mushroom cultivation)
- » Sustainability: Recycles spent mushroom compost as organic manure, reducing costs
- » Inspiring Others: Role model for landless women, received AWWA award
- » Food Security: Terrace gardening meets family's need for fresh, pesticide-free veggies

of spent mushroom compost as organic manure for terrace plants. This practice reduced input costs and improved plant growth, making the production system environmentally sustainable and resource-efficient.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

The economic performance of Aasiya's enterprises demonstrated steady and impressive growth over the three-year period (2023–2025). Her vegetable seedling production enterprise expanded significantly, resulting in a substantial increase in net income. Earnings from seedling production rose from Rs. 30,000 in 2023 to Rs. 1.60 lakh in 2025, while income from mushroom cultivation increased from Rs. 0.30 lakh to Rs. 0.70 lakh during the same period. This consistent growth reflects the successful scaling of operations, improved technical efficiency, and enhanced market linkages. Alongside income generation, terrace gardening played a vital role in ensuring household food security by meeting the family's year-round requirement of fresh, nutritious, and pesticide-free vegetables.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She gained social recognition in the community and emerged as a role model for landless women and homemakers. She received the award from President AWWA, during the year 2025. Her success encouraged other women to adopt terrace gardening and mushroom cultivation as viable livelihood options.

Influence on other Farmers:

Mrs. Aasiya Akbar's success demonstrated that profitable agriculture is possible even without owning land, motivating many local farmers to adopt innovative, space-efficient practices. Farmers in the area increasingly prefer her healthy and uniform vegetable seedlings, resulting in better crop establishment and improved yields. Her enterprise popularized terrace gardening and small-scale mushroom cultivation as viable livelihood options, particularly among landless households. Women farmers and homemakers gained confidence to start home-based agri-enterprises after witnessing her achievements. Overall, her initiative encouraged the adoption of sustainable, low-cost, and resource-efficient farming practices within the community.



[Source: Tahir Saleem, Tariq Sultan and Nazeer Ahmad Mir (KVK, Bandipora, J&K)]

61. Blooming Success: The Entrepreneurial Journey in Floriculture from Jammu & Kashmir

Profile

Name : Rubeena Tabassum
Age : 49 years
Education : MBA
Mobile No : 7006434703
Address : Village Yarikalan, Chadoora, District Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir (UT) – 191113
Enterprise : Floriculture



Background

Mrs. Rubina, driven by her passion for horticulture and floriculture, is strongly inclined towards rural entrepreneurship. She ventured into the agri-startup ecosystem by establishing a floriculture enterprise in 2006. What began as a personal interest gradually transformed into a structured entrepreneurial initiative, laying the foundation for her successful journey in the floriculture sector.

Catalyst of Change

The KVK, Budgam played a pivotal role in scaling up Rubeena's enterprise. They supported her from small-scale cut-flower cultivation to large-scale lavender and rose farming. She diversified into high-value veggies like seedless cucumber and capsicum, and got expert training in protected cultivation and pest management. KVK also got her to exhibitions and events, turning her farm into a model for others.

Pathway to Progress

Rubeena progressively diversified her farming operations by adopting semi-hi-tech greenhouses, shade-nets, and open-field cultivation, expanding lavender and rose cultivation to 25 hectares. Her vertically integrated agri-enterprise covers production, processing, branding, and direct sales. Key wins include adopting advanced tech like polyhouses and drip irrigation, launching her United Floritech brand, growing exotic veggies, and introducing contract farming, cutting out middlemen and boosting income.



Highlights:

- » Floriculture Pioneer: Established floriculture enterprise in 2006, now a leading agri-business.
- » Tech-Savvy: Adopted advanced protected cultivation technologies, boosting yields and quality.
- » Brand Power: Launched United Floritech, a premium brand with strong market recognition.
- » Employment Generator: Provides jobs to 25+ local youth, empowering the community.
- » Award-Winner: Recipient of J&K Bank Woman Entrepreneur Award, Best Grower Award, and more.
- » Rs. 1 Crore Turnover: Annual turnover, with net returns exceeding Rs. 8.0 lakh.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

Rubeena's agri-enterprise is overwhelming it. With a Rs. 1.0 crore annual turnover and Rs. 8.0 lakh+ net returns, she's employing 25+ local youth (including 5 women) and generating more livelihoods. She's expanded to 57 acres, cultivating Bulgarian roses and lavender, and supplying flowers and oils to big cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Hyderabad for festivals, weddings, and temple offerings.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Rubeena's hard work has earned her numerous accolades. She's a recipient of the J&K Bank Woman Entrepreneur Award (2007) for pioneering floriculture-based entrepreneurship, Best Grower Award for consistent quality production, Third Prize in Rose Cultivation in Jammu & Kashmir, Innovative Women Entrepreneurship Award (2025), and IARI Innovative Award, New Delhi, showcasing her technical prowess and innovative approach to agribusiness.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Rubeena Tabassum's success has strongly motivated local farmers to shift from traditional cropping to high-value floriculture and protected cultivation. Her farm serves as a live demonstration unit, encouraging adoption of polyhouses, drip irrigation, and improved pest management practices. Farmers have gained confidence in cultivating lavender, roses, and exotic vegetables as profitable alternatives. Through training programs and field visits facilitated by KVK, many farmers have enhanced their technical skills and market orientation. Her contract farming and direct marketing model has inspired others to reduce middlemen and improve incomes. Overall, she has emerged as a role model for women and youth in agripreneurship.



[Source: Bilal Ahmad Lone, Bhinish Shakeel, Ambreen Nabi, Sabia Akhter, Shabeer A.Ganie, Shazia Ramzan, Iram Farooq, Kavita Rani and K. A. Zargar (KVK, Budgam, J&K)]

62. Empowering Rural Livelihood in Punjab through Beekeeping and Honey Processing

Profile

Name	: Jagir Kaur
Age	: 67 years
Education	: 5th standard
Mobile No	: 9465560015; 8729049978
Address	: Village – Rupowali Kalan, Amritsar, Punjab
Enterprise	: Beekeeping and Value Addition



Background

Mrs. Jagir Kaur, a farm woman from Amritsar, comes from a joint family of 9 members with limited land (2.5 acres) and primary education. Conventional farming wasn't enough for economic stability, prompting her to explore alternative livelihoods.

Catalyst of Change

A turning point came when the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Amritsar visited her village to create awareness about the potential of allied agricultural enterprises in enhancing farm income and livelihood security. KVK Amritsar introduced beekeeping, and Smt. Jagir seized the opportunity. She received technical guidance, starting with 50 bee colonies in 1995, and capacity-building interventions focused on scientific management and honey extraction.

Pathway to Progress:

Her beekeeping journey started with 50 colonies (1995), scaled up to 700 (2025). She had adopted scientific practices, improved quality, and reduced losses, invested in value addition, marketing, and a honey processing unit (2017). KVK support enabled her with technical guidance, registrations, and direct



Highlights:

- » From 50 to 700 bee colonies (1995-2025)
- » Income grew from ₹50,000 to ₹10,00,000 (1995-2025)
- » Created local employment for 7-8 persons
- » Formed women SHG 'Himmati Auratan'
- » Received awards for her achievements

consumer interaction. This transformed beekeeping into a profitable, well-structured enterprise.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

She formalized beekeeping enterprise through registration of its own brand, 'Rupowali', under Agmark and FSSAI, ensuring compliance with food safety and quality standards while strengthening product identity and consumer trust. The business has also created local employment, providing regular work to 7-8 persons throughout the year, which rises to around 12 persons during peak season and migratory period. The beekeeping and honey-processing enterprise has provided Mrs. Jagir Kaur an income of Rs 50,000 in

1995 which gradually increased to Rs 10,00,000 per annum in the year 2025.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards and Recognitions

She formed 'Himmati Auratan' SHG, promoting beekeeping and empowering women. She received awards, including Appreciation Award at Kisan Mela, PAU-KVK Amritsar, and recognition for completing 'Outreach Programme on Food Processing by NIFTEM and NIMSME.

Influence on other Farmers

She success inspires farm women to adopt innovative agricultural enterprises, improving economic conditions and financial independence. Her story showcases the impact of KVK support and women's entrepreneurship in rural areas.



[Source: Manpreet Kaur and Bikramjit Singh (KVK, Amritsar, Punjab)]

63. From Local Produce to Profitable Enterprise: The Success Story from Jammu & Kashmir

Profile

Name : Anita Devi
Age : 42 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 8493977124
Address : Vill. Gunn, Kheral, Reasi, J&K
Enterprise : Value addition of fruits and vegetables and handicraft such as baskets, pen stands, dry fruit trays and hot cases



Background

Mrs. Anita Devi, a 42-year-old resident of village Gunn in Reasi district of Jammu & Kashmir, comes from a small and marginal farming family. The village is located approximately 15 km from Reasi town and about 45 km from the holy town of Katra. Owing to the family's landholding of less than one hectare and limited income sources, she undertook various odd jobs to support her household. With a strong determination to improve her family's socio-economic condition, she actively sought sustainable livelihood opportunities that could ensure stable and long-term income.

Catalyst of Change

KVK Reasi empowered women through awareness and training programs. She had led 16+ programs (2017-2025) to form SHGs, including Shri Radhey SHG in 2018. Smt. Anita's group got Rs. 1.0 lakh funding, started value addition (pickles, candies, Aam Papad) and eco-friendly handicrafts (palm, babian grass) including chabdi, binna, and gift packs, promoting sustainability.



Highlights:

- » Mrs. Anita Devi's Shri Radhey SHG transformed from marginal farming to thriving business.
- » Income grew from Rs. 2.50 (2019-20) to 12.66 lakh (2024-25).
- » KVK Reasi's support led to value-added products (pickles, Aam Papad) and eco-friendly handicrafts.
- » Inspiring other rural women to adopt scientific value addition methods

12.66 lakh in 2024-25. The remarkable success of the group has inspired other rural women in the area to adopt scientific methods of fruit and vegetable value addition for improved economic returns. A major share of the group's income is generated through the sale of pickles, handicrafts, and fresh food served to tourists and pilgrims visiting the holy shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi at Katra.

Pathway to Progress

KVK Reasi supported Shri Radhey SHG with technical guidance, skill development, and business management. The SHG opened a Duggardhani sales outlet, marketing value-added products locally and in Jammu. They participate in Kisan Melas, showcasing their products. Shri Radhey SHG is a strong example of women-led entrepreneurship, overcoming poverty together

Productivity & Income Enhancement

With these interventions, Shri Radhey SHG increased its annual income from Rs. 2.50 lakh in 2019-20 to Rs.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognitions

Shri Radhey SHG has received several prestigious awards for its outstanding achievements. The group was honoured by the Former Vice-Chancellor of SKUAST-J in 2021 and by the District Administration, Reasi, in 2021 and 2022. Mrs. Anita Devi and her team were also felicitated by the Commissioner Secretary, Rural Development, in December 2023 and appreciated by the DDG, ICAR, during his visit in February 2024. Additionally, Mrs. Anita Devi was awarded by ICAR-ATARI, Ludhiana on its Foundation Day in January 2025.

Influence on other Farmers

The success of Shri Radhey SHG has inspired other rural women in Reasi district to adopt scientific methods of fruit and vegetable value addition. Smt. Anita Devi's story showcases the impact of KVK Reasi's support and women's entrepreneurship in rural area.



[Source: Banarsi Lal and Mandeep Singh Azad (KVK, Reasi, J&K)]

64. Entrepreneurial Success through Food Processing & Value Addition

Profile

Name : Reena Chandel
Age : 40 years
Education : M.A., B.Ed.
Mobile No : 8679223613
Address : Village Gaggal, P.O. Bharmoti, Tehsil Nadaun, District Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh
Enterprise : Food processing & value addition



Background

Mrs. Reena Chandel wanted to start a small-scale enterprise to support her family. But limited resources and lack of awareness restricted her options initially. She belongs to a landless household in a hilly region, making farm-based activities challenging.

Catalyst of Change

KVK Hamirpur guided Reena in 2015, providing training on post-harvest management and value addition. She joined the ARYA project, got intensive skill-based training, and registered her SHG "New Ajjivika" in 2017. KVK's support helped her identify market potential for value-added products with minimal investment.

Pathway to Progress

KVK scientists supported Reena in group registration, marketing, and linkages. She started selling value-added products like pickles, candies, chutneys, and traditional sweets through local markets and fairs. Her products, like aonla and papaya burfi, gained popularity at Delhi Haat.



Highlights

- » Reena Chandel turned her skills into a thriving business.
- » Overcame challenges like limited resources, a landless household, and lack of awareness, thanks to KVK Hamirpur’s support.
- » Training, guidance, and linkages helped her succeed, and her SHG “New Ajivika” saw income grow from Rs. 72,715 to 7.5 lakh (2017-18 to 2024-25).
- » Won multiple awards, including the “Millionaire Farmer of India” Award (2023)
- » A role model for farm women, empowering others with her experience and connections.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

The success of Mrs. Reena Chandel has established her as a role model for farm women. She not only achieved self-reliance but also created income opportunities for women associated with her group. The annual income of her SHG ‘New Ajivika’ increased significantly from Rs. 72,715 in 2017–18 to 7.5 lakh in 2024–25. Her journey serves as a strong inspiration for farm women to adopt value-added enterprises, and she is regularly showcased as a role model for new trainees during KVK training programmes.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Reena’s received multiple awards, including:

- » Second Prize in Annual Entrepreneurship Award (2020-21)
- » Appreciation Letter from Himachal Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission
- » “Millionaire Farmer of India” Award (2023)
- » “Owner Award” from College of Horticulture and Forestry
- » Certificate of Excellence at Litro Fascinate Festival 2024



Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Reena’s success inspires farm women to adopt value-added enterprises. She’s a role model, showcasing her journey to new trainees at KVK, and supporting other SHGs with her experience and market connections. Her story has led to the formation of similar SHGs in the region. She’s empowering women and creating a ripple effect in her community.



[Source: Vishal Dogra, Navneet Jaryal and Chhavi (KVK, Hamirpur, H.P.)]

65. Women as Change Agents in Mountain Agriculture

Profile:

Name : Roop Rashmi Sana
Age : 43 Years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 98055 95939
Address : Village-Pooh, District Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh
Enterprise : Mushroom Cultivation, Millets and Value Addition



Background

Mrs. Roop Rashmi Sana, a progressive farm woman from the dry temperate region of Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh, exemplifies women's transformative role in agriculture through knowledge-driven innovation and determination. She was a farm woman with poor income who adopted improved agricultural technologies to diversify her income sources and achieved economic self-reliance.

Catalyst of Change

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kinnaur played a pivotal role in strengthening her agri-enterprise through continuous technical support and systematic capacity-building. KVK Kinnaur empowered her agri-enterprise with technical support and capacity-building. She gained skills in scientific oyster mushroom cultivation and post-harvest management of local produce. This boosted her entrepreneurial capacity, creating a sustainable and profitable business.

Pathway to Progress

KVK Kinnaur and line departments empowered her with technical and entrepreneurial skills. She integrated oyster mushroom cultivation using local resources, creating a sustainable income source. Her efforts promoted eco-friendly practices, supporting resilient livelihoods in Kinnaur's challenging ecosystem.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

She shifted from subsistence farming to a stable livelihood through scientific oyster mushroom cultivation. Income grew from ₹36,000 (2022) to ₹1,00,000 (2025). She diversified into value-added



Highlights:

- » Shifted from subsistence farming to stable livelihood through oyster mushroom cultivation
- » Income grew from ₹36,000 (2022) to ₹1,00,000 (2025)
- » Diversified into value-added products and live food stalls
- » Promoting sustainable food systems and eco-friendly practices

products (apple jam, pickles) and live food stalls, adding ₹25,000–₹1,00,000 annually. This boosted financial stability, reduced risk, and promoted sustainable food systems.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her active involvement in agricultural activities has established her as a progressive woman farmer and a respected leader among farm women in her locality. In recognition of her pioneering efforts to mushroom cultivation, she has earned recognition as ‘Mushroom Lady of Kinnaur’.

Influence on Other Farmers

Her success with oyster mushroom cultivation and value-added products has inspired other farmers in Kinnaur to adopt similar practices. They’re replicating her model, exploring local resources for sustainable income.



66. Wings of Determination: An Inspiring Journey in Poultry Farming

Profile

Name : Seema
Age : 27 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 8449097877
Address : Village- Sira, PO-Gadoli, Chinyalisaur, Uttarkashi – 245152, Uttarakhand
Enterprise : Poultry Farming



Background

Mrs. Seema, a motivated young woman from Uttarkashi, started poultry farming with 50 birds in 2020. Her family relied on agriculture and wage labour, but income was limited and uncertain. Recognizing the growing demand for poultry meat and the potential for quick returns, she identified poultry farming as a promising enterprise. In 2020, despite limited resources, she began broiler farming at the household level with just 50 birds. During the initial phase, she encountered challenges related to scientific management, disease control, and marketing, which constrained productivity and profitability.

Catalyst of Change

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Uttarkashi identified Seema as a progressive and motivated beneficiary and extended technical support to strengthen her poultry enterprise. She mastered scientific broiler farming, covering housing, feeding, vaccination, and biosecurity. KVK connected her to government schemes, quality chicks, and financial aid, giving her enterprise a big boost.

Pathway to Progress

With increased confidence and enhanced technical knowledge, Seema gradually expanded her poultry unit from an initial 50 birds to larger batches by reinvesting the profits back into the enterprise. Seema expanded her poultry farm from 50 to 4,000 birds, adopting scientific practices and reinvesting profits. She ensured proper ventilation, vaccination, and biosecurity, achieving uniform growth and better prices. Her entrepreneurial skills and KVK guidance transformed her venture into a thriving commercial farm



Highlights:

- » Seema, a motivated young woman from Uttarkashi, started poultry farming with 50 birds in 2020.
- » KVK Uttarkashi provided technical support, connecting her to government schemes and quality resources.
- » Farm expanded from 50 to 4,000 birds, with turnover rising from Rs. 9,000 to 28.00 lakh.
- » Generated local employment and inspired rural youth and women to adopt poultry farming.
- » Seema's success promotes scientific poultry farming and women's empowerment.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

Seema's poultry enterprise expanded from a 50-bird unit in 2020-21 to a 4,000-bird commercial farm by 2024-25, leading to significant socio-economic transformation. Her annual turnover increased from Rs. 9,000 to 28,00,000, while gross profit rose from Rs.1,500 to 2,65,000, reflecting improved technical efficiency, input management, and market linkages. The enterprise also generated local employment and inspired rural youth and women to adopt poultry farming for livelihood enhancement and women's empowerment.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Seema's success with poultry farming has inspired other farmers in Uttarkashi district. Rural youth and women are adopting poultry farming as a viable livelihood option, encouraged by her journey. Her

entrepreneurial spirit and KVK support are promoting scientific poultry farming, generating local employment, and empowering women. Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Seema's remarkable success in poultry farming has created a strong demonstration effect among farmers in Uttarkashi district. Her journey from a small 50-bird unit to a 4,000-bird commercial farm has built confidence among rural youth and women to adopt poultry as a reliable livelihood option. Many farmers visit her unit to learn about scientific housing, feeding, vaccination, and biosecurity practices. Her association with KVK and effective use of government schemes has encouraged others to seek technical guidance and institutional support. As a local role model, she has contributed to the spread of scientific poultry farming, income diversification, and women's empowerment in the region.



67. Conventional Farming to Value-Added Dairy Entrepreneurship: A Success Story from Bihar

Profile

Name	:	Bandana Kumari
Age	:	42 years
Education	:	B.A., B.Ed
Mobile No	:	8210230900
Address	:	Merha, Katoria, Banka, Bihar
Enterprise	:	Crop-Dairy



Background

Mrs. Bandana, a rural woman from a farming family faced initial challenges like low productivity, climate vulnerability, and poor returns from conventional cropping on her 13 acres of land. However, she persevered and sought scientific guidance to improve her farm's performance and transformed as a successful agripreneur.

Catalyst of Change

Her life took a turning point when she approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Banka, for advice. With KVK's guidance, she adopted improved farming practices, enhancing soil health and crop yields. She also designed a rainwater harvesting model, supporting 10 dairy animals, and adopted climate-resilient technologies.

Pathway to Progress

Her diversified into dairy farming (2012), procuring 10 lactating cows and adopting scientific management practices. She developed a low-cost winnowing machine and, with KVK's support, initiated value addition (2020). She started producing paneer, curd, lassi, and ghee, following standard scientific methods.



Highlights

- » Early adopter of Scientific Farming Practices
- » Successfully converted 2.75 acres of barren land into productive agricultural land
- » Annual income: around Rs 2.60 Lakh
- » Designed and developed a low-cost winnowing machine
- » Transitioned from raw milk sale to value-added milk products

Upadhyay Krishi Puraskar (2020); Krishak Awards for Water Conservation (2021); Best Innovative Farmer Award (ICAR-CRIDA, 2021); Mahindra Samridhi Zonal Award. She empowered women farmers, created employment opportunities, and strengthened collective decision-making.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Bandana plans to establish a milk chilling plant, launch branded dairy products, and expand into lac production. Her journey inspires women-led entrepreneurship and sustainable rural development, serving as a powerful example for others to follow.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her dairy unit's daily milk production increased to 70-80 litres. Value addition significantly boosted her earnings from Rs. 250-300 to 725-996 per day with an annual income of around Rs. 2.60 Lakh. Paneer production became the most profitable enterprise, generating income from paneer, ghee, and whey-based products.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her efforts earned her recognition and several prestigious awards, including: Pandit Deen Dayal



[Source: Brajendu Kumar and Neha Singh (KVK, Banka, Bihar)]

68. Subsistence to Sustainability: The Journey of a Mushroom Entrepreneur

Profile

Name	: Rinku Devi
Age	: 44 years
Education	: 10th standard
Mobile No	: 7667402204
Address	: Jhirwa, Chutia PO, Banka, Banka, Bihar
Enterprise	: Mushroom Cultivation



Background

Mrs. Rinku Devi exemplifies how determination and innovation can transform rural livelihoods. Belonging to a small farming household in Banka district of Bihar, she recognized the limitations of traditional agriculture and identified mushroom cultivation as a viable secondary enterprise. By harnessing its low-input, high-return potential, she envisioned creating a sustainable income source for herself and other rural women.

Catalyst of Change

A significant turning point in Rinku Devi's journey occurred in 2011 when she participated in a one-day training programmes on mushroom cultivation, which introduced her to the enterprise's low-cost and high-return potential. Motivated to pursue this opportunity further, she underwent an intensive five-day training on mushroom cultivation and value addition at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Banka in 2012. Continuous technical guidance, exposure to improved practices, and confidence-building support from KVK scientists encouraged her to move beyond conventional farming. These structured capacity-building interventions strengthened her technical competence, entrepreneurial outlook, and determination to adopt mushroom cultivation as a sustainable livelihood enterprise.

Pathway to Progress

Mrs. Rinku Devi initiated mushroom cultivation on a modest scale with 50–60 bags, converting a small room of her house into a production unit. The initial phase was marked by challenges such as contamination, yield losses, and limited market access. Instead of discontinuing the enterprise, she strengthened her skills through repeated trainings and practical learning. With continuous handholding



Highlights

- » Pioneered mushroom cultivation in Banka district
- » Catalyzed community-wide adoption from single to 35 units
- » Promoted eco-friendly practices in mushroom cultivation
- » Annual income: around Rs. 5.09 lakh
- » Emerged as a master trainer by empowering 400+ women and rural youth

support from Krishi Vigyan Kendra Banka, she adopted improved production practices and gradually diversified into oyster, button, and milky mushrooms. She also introduced value-added products such as mushroom badi and pickles, enabling year-round production, better price realization, and enhanced enterprise sustainability.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

At the outset, Mrs. Rinku Devi augmented her household income through the adoption of scientific mushroom cultivation, earning approximately ₹50,000 annually during the initial phase and progressively achieving financial stability. Her enterprise adopted

a diversified production strategy comprising oyster (25.0 q), button (9.0 q), and milky mushrooms (11.0 q), with a total output of 45.0 quintals. The cultivation incurred a total cost of Rs. 2.99 lakh and generated gross returns of ₹8.08 lakh, resulting in a net return of Rs. 5.09 lakh. Among the enterprises, oyster mushroom recorded the highest economic efficiency with a benefit–cost ratio of 3.61, followed by milky (2.29) and button mushrooms (2.13), thereby strengthening income stability and overall enterprise sustainability. This expansion significantly improved her livelihood security.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

In addition to individual benefits, her efforts generated widespread socio-economic impact in the village. With support from ATMA, Banka, she facilitated the formation of Shiv Shakti Krishak Hitkari Self-Help Group, enrolling 22 farmers.

Influence on other Farmers

Rinku Devi drove oyster mushroom cultivation in Banka district. She trained 400+ women and youth, spreading tech to 35 units with 10 quintals monthly production. Her efforts reached Munger, Bhagalpur, and Lakhisarai district of Bihar. Using bamboo leaves as substrate cut costs and boosted sustainability.



69. Breaking Poverty Barriers through Mushroom: A Grassroot Woman-Led Innovation

Profile

Name : Madhu Patel
Age : 44 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No. : 9386301605
Address : Gajendra Bigha, Hilsa Nalanda (Bihar)
Enterprise : Mushroom cultivation and Spawn Production



Background

Mrs. Madhu Patel no longer needs any introduction today. Earlier, her family income depended on her husband's medicinal plant cultivation on 1–5 acres of land, which was not sufficient for proper household sustenance. Moreover, the devastating flood of 2008 severely affected their farming activities, further worsening their economic condition.

Catalyst of Change

In view of above challenges, Mrs. Madhu decided to start her own self-employment venture. With technical guidance from scientists of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Nalanda, she chose mushroom production as a livelihood option. She started mushroom cultivation with 60 bags, earning a net profit of Rs. 1,550 in the very first season. With strong determination and confidence, she worked throughout the year to increase mushroom demand, spread awareness about its benefits among local people, and generate income. Simultaneously, she connected dozens of rural women with mushroom production as a business activity.

Pathway to Progress

After receiving advanced training in value addition from the KVK, she began developing a range of mushroom-based recipes and value-added products, significantly enhancing consumer appeal and market demand. As she sought to scale up mushroom production, dependence on procuring spawn from distant locations such as Delhi and Ranchi led to higher production costs. To address this constraint, she resolved to produce mushroom spawn independently. Accordingly, she underwent specialized training in spawn production at KVK Nalanda, Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour, and the Directorate of Mushroom Research, Solan (HP). With technical guidance and institutional support from KVK and the Department of Agriculture, Nalanda, she successfully established a Button Mushroom



Highlights

- » Built a sustainable mushroom cultivation and spawn production enterprise.
- » Annual income: Rs. 40.035 lakh
- » Linked ~3,000 rural women through Self-Help Groups.
- » Generated employment via mushroom cultivation, value-added products, and spawn production.

Spawn Production Laboratory at Rajgir.

Alongside mushroom cultivation, Mrs. Madhu initiated freshwater pearl production in 2017. She started with 200 mussels and currently produces pearls from around 3,000 mussels annually. She produces round pearls and designer pearls.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

KVK interventions significantly improved the economic performance of her mushroom production and mushroom spawn enterprises over the years. In mushroom cultivation, the cost of

production decreased from Rs. 8,000 to Rs. 5,000 per quintal after the intervention, while income per quintal increased from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 11,000. This resulted in higher total production (from 6.40 to 11.0 quintals) and an increase in net income from Rs. 56,000 to Rs. 1,16,000, along with employment generation for two persons for 120 days. In the case of mushroom spawn production, KVK support led to a reduction in production cost from Rs. 4,200 to Rs. 3,150 per quintal and a substantial increase in income per quintal. Total production increased sharply from 10 to 500 quintals, raising net income from Rs. 58,000 to 40.035 lakh. Employment generation also improved, increasing from engagement of two persons for 60 days to four persons for 250 days.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has received several accolades, she has served as the Chairperson of the Mushroom Growers' Association of Nalanda and received the Innovative Farmer Award from Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour. Her enterprise has attracted visits from district and state administration including a visit by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Bihar, Shri Nitish Kumar.

Influence on other Farmers

Because of easy and affordable availability of spawn, many women in the district have adopted mushroom production as a self-employment option. Madhu has linked nearly 3,000 women with Self-Help Groups and strengthened their economic condition through mushroom production. Through income generation and health awareness, she has shown rural women a sustainable pathway to empowerment and progress. Under the banner of Ujjwal Bihar Mushroom Farmer Interest Group, Gajendra Bigha (Hilsa), mushroom-based products such as Thekua, Namkeen, Sev, Laddoo, Mathri, etc., are becoming popular with technical support from KVK Nalanda.



[Source: Seema Kumari and Jyoti Sinha (KVK, Nalanda, Bihar)]

70. Turning Banana Waste into Sustainable Livelihoods

Profile

Name : Neelam Devi
Age : 45 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 7654662166
Address : Rajapakar, Vaishali, Bihar
Enterprise : FIG Jan Jagriti swayan Sahayata Samuh



Background

Mrs. Neelam Devi, a 45-year-old woman from Rajapakar village, Vaishali district, Bihar, is a member of FIG Jan Jagriti Swayam Sahayata Samuh and a 12th-standard educated rural entrepreneur. Prior to intervention, she had no organized agri-based enterprise, and banana pseudostems in her region were treated as waste. Limited technical knowledge, resources, credit access, market linkages, and social constraints confined her to irregular and low income, leaving the potential for value addition and livelihood diversification untapped.

Catalyst of Change

A significant change occurred with her inclusion under the ARYA (Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture) Project. Through this initiative, she received hands-on training and technical guidance on banana fiber extraction and handicraft production. Support was provided to establish a banana fiber extraction unit with one machine, along with continuous mentoring for enterprise development. She was also facilitated to participate in Krishi Melas and state-level fairs, which provided much-needed exposure to markets and customers.

Pathway to Progress

Initially, Mrs. Neelam Devi started the enterprise at an individual level by adopting banana fiber extraction technology to utilize agricultural waste. Gradually, she began producing a range of value-



Highlights

- » Creating a sustainable waste-to-wealth model.
- » Increased net annual income from Rs. 20,000 to 3.50 lakh through value addition and market expansion.
- » Emerged as rural entrepreneur and promoting group-based women entrepreneurship.

and handicraft products. Although the cost of production rose from Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 1,00,000, her economic gains improved substantially. Her gross annual income increased from Rs. 60,000 to 4,50,000, while net income rose from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 3.50 per year. The enterprise ensured better livelihood security, efficient utilization of banana waste, and generation of self-employment as well as group-based income opportunities.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Beyond economic gains, the initiative brought significant social impact. Smt. Neelam Devi's confidence and entrepreneurial skills improved markedly, and her role in household and enterprise-level decision-making strengthened. She received recognition at district-level programmes and ICAR-level fairs and has now emerged as a role model for rural women.

Influence on other Farmers

Her success has encouraged others to adopt waste-to-wealth enterprises and strengthened leadership and collective action through SHG-based entrepreneurship.

She plans to further scale up production, diversify product designs, and strengthen market linkages, while motivating and training more women to adopt banana fiber-based enterprises.

added handicrafts such as handbags, wall hangings, wall paintings, coasters, and decorative items. Encouraged by growing demand and institutional support, she expanded the activity into a group-based enterprise model, which improved production efficiency, collective participation, and marketing outreach. Her products found markets beyond the local area, reaching Patna and other parts of Bihar.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

As a result of enterprise expansion, her production capacity increased to around 50 kg of banana fiber



[Source: Kumari Namrata and Anil Kumar (KVK, Vaishali, Bihar)]

71. Small Beginnings to A Thriving Enterprise through Value Addition in Mushroom

Profile

Name	: Rambha Devi
Age	: 37 years
Education	: 8th standard
Mobile No	: 9234249697
Address	: Husaina Ragho, Vaishali, Bihar
Enterprise	: Mushroom Production and Value Addition



Background

Mrs. Rambha Devi is a compelling example of how scientific support and value addition can transform a small household activity into a thriving rural enterprise. Initially Rambha Devi was engaged in small scale mushroom cultivation using traditional methods, resulting in low productivity and marginal income. Limited access to modern technologies, quality inputs, credit facilities, and organized markets restricted enterprise growth. Operating individually and facing social constraints, she had minimal exposure to entrepreneurship and value-added activities.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point came with her inclusion under the ARYA project, implemented through KVK/ICAR support. She received skill-oriented training on improved mushroom production and value addition, along with continuous technical guidance and hand-holding support. With project assistance, she established a mushroom production and value-addition unit equipped with basic machinery. Exposure through Krishi Melas, exhibitions, and fairs further strengthened her confidence and market understanding

Pathway to Progress

Following these interventions, Mrs. Rambha Devi adopted improved mushroom production practices and diversified into a wide range of value-added products such as mushroom pickle, peda,



Highlights

- » Transitioned from traditional, small-scale mushroom cultivation to an organized enterprise
- » Diversified into multiple value-added mushroom products
- » Expanded the enterprise from 10 to 30 functional units
- » Increased net annual income from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 4.5 lakh

bhujia, kheer, chutney, soap, and shampoo. Gradually, she transitioned from an individual enterprise to a group-based model, enabling collective production and marketing. Her products gained access to markets in Samastipur, Muzaffarpur & Patna district of Bihar as well as and Lucknow, significantly expanding her outreach.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

As a result, her enterprise scaled up substantially. The number of functional units increased from 10 to 30, while production reached about 50 kg of mushrooms and value-added products. Although the

cost of production rose from Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 1,25,000 due to expansion and technology adoption, her economic gains were remarkable. Her gross annual income increased from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 5,75,000, and net income rose from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 4,50,000 per year. The enterprise ensured livelihood security and generated self-employment and income opportunities for other group members.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Beyond financial success, the initiative had a strong social impact. Smt. Rambha Devi gained confidence, respect, and a stronger decision-making role within her family and community. She now plays a leadership role in group-based enterprise activities and serves as a mentor and role model for rural women and youth. Her participation in district- and state-level programmes and exhibitions under ICAR/KVK has further strengthened her recognition. She has been felicitated by Hon'ble Minister of State Shri Nityanand Rai and Green TV India for her outstanding contribution in Value Addition of Mushroom.

Influence on other Farmers

Beyond financial success, the initiative had a strong social impact. Mrs. Rambha Devi gained confidence, respect, and a stronger decision-making role within her family and community. She now plays a leadership role in group-based enterprise activities and serves as a mentor and role model for rural women and youth. Her participation in district and state-level programmes and exhibitions under ICAR/KVK has further strengthened her recognition. Looking ahead, she plans to expand production capacity, improve packaging and branding, explore online and institutional markets, and train more rural women in mushroom-based enterprises. Her journey demonstrates how KVK-ARYA interventions, combined with women's determination, can create sustainable livelihoods and inclusive rural growth.



[Source: Kumari Namrata and Anil Kumar (KVK, Vaishali, Bihar)]

72. Silence to Strength: A Beacon of Women's Empowerment in the heart of Bihar

Profile

Name : Rani Devi
Age : 38 years
Education : 8th standard
Mobile No : 9693119218
Address : Pandapa, Nardiganj, Nawada, Bihar
Enterprise : Value addition



Background

Mrs. Rani Devi hails from a socio-economically disadvantaged rural household. Orphaned early and married young due to financial constraints, her education and aspirations were curtailed. Her challenges intensified after marriage when her husband lost his job during the COVID-19 pandemic and withdrew from family responsibilities. Constrained by patriarchal norms, social stigma, and criticism from family and community, she remained confined to unpaid household work with limited economic independence, mobility, and decision-making power.

Pathway to Progress

The turning point came when Rani Devi connected with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) through a Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) training programme. Despite social resistance, she adopted DSR technology on 60 decimals of land using the Pioneer 27P37 variety. She received continuous technical guidance, capacity building, and exposure through KVK and community-based initiatives. Encouraged by initial success, she gradually emerged as a leader by mobilizing women farmers, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, and actively participating in Farmer Producer Company (FPC) activities. Her confidence, communication skills, and leadership abilities evolved through regular field demonstrations, farmer meetings, and institutional engagement.



Highlight

- » Board of Director of the Farmer Producer Company Ltd Nawada
- » FPO Annual turnover of up to Rs. 2.72 core and roe model for other women
- » The group is involved in production of wide range of value-added products viz Pulse, Mustard oil etc.
- » Quality & Purity based Agri input timely provide the farmers for Crop cultivation in Nardiganj Block, Nawada.

Conclave Agri. Award, BCC & Aiding Business, New Delhi (17 January, 2025), Innovative Agricultural Practices, Panchane Fed Farmers Producer Com. Ltd., Nawada, Best FPO award from KVK Nawada (Kisan Mela 2024), Outstanding Business Turnover Panchane Fed FPO Nardiganj, Nawada from Women FPO Conclave (09.01.2025) by Agriculture Minister, Govt. Of Bihar.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Rani Devi's journey inspires farmers. She promotes sustainable practices, challenges gender norms, and strengthens grassroots governance. Her leadership boosts women's participation and self-reliance. She aims to expand membership, improve market linkages, and scale up climate-resilient technology.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her adoption of DSR technology boosted her yield and income. She earned Rs. 6,000 extra and gained confidence, becoming a DSR Ambassador and FPC Board Director. She mobilized 300+ women farmers, guiding 1,300 farmers and promoting sustainable practices. Her leadership increased women's participation and visibility in agriculture.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has won multiple prizes at 9th Edition, FPO



73. Diversified Farming for prosperity in Bihar

Profile

Name : Rina Devi
Age : 42 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 9608559815
Address : Ramgarh Mahuwawa, East Champaran, Bihar
Enterprise : Agri-Entrepreneur



Background

Mrs. Rina Devi, a farm woman from Ramgarh Mahuwawa, Chakiya block under East Champaran district followed conventional form of farming till 2018, where she dedicated her entire farmland (3 acre) to rice-wheat cropping system without any intervention of new technologies in crop production. Where in, she also practiced orchard cultivation of mango in 0.5 acre without following any training, pruning, nutrient or pest management strategies. She had received an average annual net income of 1.12 lakh rupees from rice-wheat farming and orchard, which was hardly more than the cost incurred in farming.

Catalyst of Change

Her journey with KVK began in 2018. She received vocational training in mushroom cultivation and scientific beekeeping and took part in KVK initiatives such as FLD, CFLD, Natural Farming, and Oilseed demonstrations. She adopted climate-resilient tech, boosted mango yield, and set up a mushroom unit. An active Jeevika member, she is trained in agri-drone operations, nursery seedling production under NARI, and sustainable poultry under ARYA. Now, she earns Rs. 3-4 lakh/year, while mobilizing women farmers in the vicinity.

Pathway to Progress

Climate Resilient techniques like RCTs in paddy and wheat resulted in reduced cost of cultivation thereby improving net return per cropped area. Crop diversification was achieved through incorporation of crops like: rapeseed (oilseed crops) and year-round vegetable cultivation. She is also an entrepreneur running sustainable enterprises of Poultry Farming and Mushroom Cultivation. She is a member of Jeevika group and also leads different farm women.



Highlights

- » Successfully transformed conventional rice-wheat farming into a diversified, climate-resilient and profitable farming system
- » Doubled her annual income from around Rs. 1.12 lakh to Rs. 3–4 lakh per annum
- » Established herself as a progressive farm woman entrepreneur and leader, adopting advanced practices

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Positive economic gains were clearly observed after KVK interventions, with her annual return increasing to over Rs. 2.4 lakh from the same landholding. Adoption of RCTs in paddy and wheat reduced cultivation costs and improved net returns, while GAPs enhanced mango yield and fruit quality. Crop diversification included oilseeds (rapeseed) and vegetables (okra, brinjal, tomato, cucurbits, radish), and chemical-free, year-round vegetable cultivation was practiced under a shade-net house. She established a backyard mushroom unit (750 bags), recently expanded in convergence with DHO, East Champaran, and also manages a profitable poultry unit with 500 chicks. An active Jeevika member,

she has Agri-Drone training, delivered local TV talks on zero-tillage, and played a key role in mobilizing women farmers for entrepreneurship and home-based value addition activities.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She was honoured with an Appreciation Certificate in recognition of her exceptional contributions as the Best Community Mobilizer and Agri-Entrepreneur of Chakiya Block. This prestigious recognition was awarded during the Margdarshan Mela organized by JEEVIKA, East Champaran in 2025, celebrating her efforts in empowering rural women, promoting sustainable agriculture, and demonstrating leadership in community mobilization.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Rina Devi's innovations in mushroom cultivation, poultry, and value-added processing inspire women farmers. She is a role model, promoting sustainable practices, boosting self-reliance. Gaining financial independence, she enhances self-confidence and decision-making; and being a true innovation leader, she has been motivating others to adopt income-generating activities.



[Source: Arvind Kumar Singh, Gayatri Kumari Padhi, Savita Kumari, Manish Kumar and Tejaswini Kapil (KVK, East Champaran, Bihar)]

74. Technological Interventions for Transforming Livelihood of Farm Women in Jharkhand

Profile:

Name : Pratibha Kisku
Age : 38 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 6203255458
Address : Gunghasa, Pauriahaat, Godda, Jharkhand
Enterprise : Integrated farming system – crops, livestock, mushroom cultivation and spawn production
Affiliation : SHG member



Background

Mrs. Pratibha Kisku is a small farmer, having 3 acres of land. She used to cultivate local low yielding variety of different crops under rainfed condition during Kharif only and used to rear local breed of pig and goat. Her income was low (about Rs. 1,50,000/year) and facing hardship to run the livelihood. She was eager to learn technologies related to agriculture and allied activities for enhancing their income. During off campus training in her village during the year 2014–15, she interacted very much with the KVK team about the latest technologies related to cultivation of crops and rearing of animals. Since 2014 – 15 she regularly visits the KVK and participates in different activities of KVK, Godda.

Catalyst of Change

KVK Godda's NICRA project transformed Pratibha's village. Training programmes on irrigation, crop production, and livestock boosted farmers' skills. Water harvesting structures enabled year-round farming in 8–10 ha. KVK provided high-yielding crop varieties, Jharsuk pigs, and Black Bengal goats. A custom hiring centre with farm equipment saved labour costs and eased farming operations.

Pathway to Progress

Creation of water harvesting structure, capacity building programmes, demonstration of high yielding climate resilient crops variety and improved breed of pig and goat under NICRA project made the pathways to progress. Drought tolerant paddy variety Sahbhagi, IPA – 203 varieties of pigeonpea, A-404 variety of finger millet, Pusa Mustard – 28 variety of mustard, less irrigation required variety Sabour Nirjal of wheat and Swarna Pratibha variety of brinjal was demonstrated on her field. After demonstration she is continuing the technologies. Beside this, Jharsuk breed of pig and Black Bengal breed of goat was also provided under demonstration. She also participated in the training programme of Mushroom cultivation and started journey of mushroom cultivation. She was facing troublesome due to unavailability of spawn at local level for sustainable production of mushroom. Due to this, she was eager to know about spawn production technology and required equipments. During the year 2024 – 25 she started the production of Oyster mushroom spawn with the technical guidance of KVK and financial help with other organization.



Highlights

- » Diversified farming adopted through KVK support
- » ~60% increase in annual income
- » Successful mushroom cultivator and spawn producer
- » Women leader empowering 480 farmers via SHGs

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The integrated interventions resulted in substantial improvement in productivity, diversification of enterprises, and income enhancement. Her annual gross income increased from Rs. 4.67 lakh (2014–15) to 7.50 lakh (2024–25), reflecting an overall income increase of about 60.6%. Significant gains were recorded in paddy, mustard, brinjal, livestock enterprises, and newly introduced mushroom and spawn production. Enhanced income ensured household food security, improved living standards, and expanded employment opportunities.

Her on-farm employment increased from 75 days to nearly 190 days per year, and she now provides wage employment to 2–3 rural workers for about 60 days annually.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has been awarded first prize by DAO for exhibiting mushroom in 'Jila Stariya Kisan Mela sah Krishi Pradarshani 2025' in Sunderpahari block, Godda and progressive farmer award by GVT – KVK, Godda during Kisan Samman Diwas 2025.

Influence on other Farmers

She is also a member of a Self-Help Group (SHG) and has empowered about 480 women farmers through horizontal dissemination by sharing her experiences and demonstrating the interventions. Now she is decision maker of her family and mentor for other women also. She has been awarded by DAO for exhibiting mushroom in Kisan Mela and also by GVT – KVK, Godda. Her future plan is to increase the spawn production and different strains of mushroom vis. Button, Milky etc. to meet the maximum demand of the district. She is also planning to install a composting unit for Button mushroom production. She also wants to spread the technologies related to climate resilient agriculture and allied activities in nearby villages to improve the livelihood of other poor farmers.



[Source: Ravi Shanker and Surya Bhushan (KVK, Godda, Jharkhand)]

75. From Forest Produce to Fortune: Inspiring Journey of Tribal Women Empowerment in Jharkhand

Profile

Name : Anita Devi
Age : 35 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9386371817
Address : Nawagarh Serka, Bishunpur, Gumla, Bihar
Enterprise : Value Addition



Background

Mrs. Anita Devi is a shining example of how determination, vision, and collective effort can transform rural livelihoods. Belonging to a tribal area rich in forest and farm resources, she recognized early the immense potential of value addition in secondary agriculture and resolved to convert local produce into sustainable income opportunities for women.

Catalyst of Change

Initially, Anita Devi was involved in small-scale traditional processing with her mother. However, her education and forward-looking mindset motivated her to think beyond subsistence activities. As the Chairperson of Sarvshree Mahila Samiti, a women Self-Help Group (SHG), she began restructuring the group with a clear focus on organized value addition, quality production, and market linkage.

A major turning point came in 2012 when she approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Gumla with a concrete plan. With the technical guidance and continuous mentoring of KVK scientists, a detailed roadmap was developed for capacity building of SHG members. Training was imparted in collection, grading, processing, packaging, and marketing of forest- and crop-based produce. Regular follow-up, exposure through Kisan Melas and exhibitions, and facilitation of market linkages with agencies such as TRIFED and PALAS further strengthened the initiative.

Pathway to Progress

The group began its journey with a modest investment of Rs. 35,000, focusing initially on the production of Jamun (blackberry) vinegar. Within a short span, the enterprise generated a net income of Rs. 65,000–75,000, instilling confidence among SHG members. Encouraged by the early success and Anita Devi's dynamic leadership, the group diversified into a wide range of value-added products including tamarind, jackfruit, elephant yam, bamboo shoots, ragi, traditional rice varieties, tomato and potato products, pickles, jelly, ketchup, vinegar, and namkeen. Today, the SHG maintains an annual turnover of 5–6 lakh.



Highlights

- » Chairman of the SHG Sarveshwari Mahila Samiti
- » Annual income upto 15-20 lakh and role model for other women
- » The group is involved in production of wide range of value-added products
- » SHG represented at different platforms including World Food India

Productivity & Income Enhancement

At the individual level, Mrs. Anita Devi now earns an impressive annual income of Rs. 15–20 lakh, becoming completely self-reliant and a role model for rural women. Beyond her personal success, her initiative has had a far-reaching social impact. More than 125 SHGs have adopted value addition of minor forest produce and crops, generating additional incomes ranging from Rs. 50,000 to 7.00 lakh per year. Around 400–500 women are directly engaged in processing activities, gaining skills, employment, and economic confidence.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Won multiple prizes at SARAS, AGROTECH BAU, and other events for products like ketchup, jelly, pickle, and namkeen. Notable wins include 1st prize for Pickle (AGROTECH BAU, 2015); 1st prize for Pickle & Namkeen (BAU Ranchi, 2018); participated in World Food India (2017) and other national events.

Influence on other Farmers

Under her leadership, 15 producer groups have been formed, of which six are registered under FSSAI, ensuring quality compliance and better market access. Her SHG has received continuous recognition at state and national levels, including participation and awards at SARAS Melas, Rastriya Khadi and Saras Mahotsav, AGROTECH Mela (BAU Ranchi), and the prestigious World Food India 2017 organized by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India. Anita Devi's journey has not only enhanced incomes but also elevated the social status of women by strengthening their decision-making role within families and communities. Her efforts align closely with state initiatives under Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society (JSLPS) to promote women-led enterprises and self-employment.



[Source: Nisha Tiwari, Brijesh Pandey and Rahul Kumar (KVK, Gumla, Jharkhand)]

76. Women-Led Millet Entrepreneurship for Transforming Rural Village of Jharkhand

Profile

Name : Bhagwati Devi
Age : 43 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 9835590350
Address : Alankera Pahartoli, Gumla, Jharkhand
Enterprise : Millet production and its value addition through FPO



Background

Bhagwati Devi, a 43-year-old woman farmer from Alankera Pahartoli village in Gumla district of Jharkhand, represents a remarkable journey of transformation from a low-income smallholder farmer to a recognized agripreneur and community leader. Educated up to the 10th standard, she began her journey as a member of a Self-Help Group (SHG), facing limited income opportunities, weak market access, and minimal social recognition—challenges typical of women farmers in remote and Naxal-affected tribal regions.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point in her life came with the formation of a women-led Farmer Producer Organization (FPO). Under her leadership, the FPO focused on strengthening the complete value chain of finger millet (ragi)—from production to processing and marketing. The organization provided free quality ragi seeds to local farmers, encouraging large-scale adoption of millet cultivation. Continuous capacity building, convergence with government schemes, and collective decision-making empowered women members to move beyond subsistence farming towards market-oriented agribusiness.

Pathway to Progress

Aligned with the Ragi Mission Gumla, Bhagwati Devi played a pivotal role in transforming the district into what is now popularly known as the “Ragi Capital of India.” The mission promoted climate-resilient millet cultivation, value addition, and nutrition security through women-led SHGs and FPOs. As a result, ragi productivity increased by nearly 300 percent, significantly enhancing farm incomes while simultaneously addressing issues of malnutrition and food security in the region.



Highlights

- » Women-Led FPO Leadership
- » Instrumental in transforming Gumla into India's "Ragi Capital" under Ragi Mission.
- » Built a millet enterprise with Rs. 5.5 crore annual turnover.
- » Generated employment for ~200 rural women in ragi processing and packaging, marketing.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Increase in productivity by 300% and the enterprise has achieved an impressive annual revenue of around Rs. 5.5 crore, emerging as a major economic driver in the local economy. Nearly 200 rural women are now engaged on a regular or part-time basis in activities such as ragi processing, packaging, and marketing, creating sustainable employment and skill development opportunities.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Today, MVM Baghima Palkot FPO stands as a model of rural entrepreneurship and women empowerment. Because of her marvelous work in the field oand ragi, Mrs Bhagwati was awarded with many awards like Jharkhand hunar ke heere from ex-chief minister hon'ble Shri Raghuvar das in 2018, Sail India 2024 award by Ministry of food products for her excellent exhibition. In 2024 her FPO was also awarded in Saras Mela and also awarded with Sampoorna Shakti Award at Ranchi in 2025.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Bhagwati Devi's journey highlights how institutional support, women's leadership, and value-addition-based agribusiness can convert traditional farming into a viable and scalable enterprise. From an invisible agricultural laborer, she has evolved into a producer-entrepreneur, shareholder, and role model for tribal women across Jharkhand. Through innovative use of government schemes, continuous training, and collective participation, Bhagwati Devi has successfully turned traditional farming into a sustainable business model. Her journey is an inspiring example of how tribal women can evolve into successful entrepreneurs and community leaders under the right institutional support and guidance.



77. Field to Fame: The Inspiring Journey of a Millet Entrepreneur from Jharkhand

Profile:

Name : Sarita Devi
Age : 34 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9835107806
Address : Gutru, Burmu , Ranchi, Jharkhand
Enterprise : Value added products of Millets



Background

Mrs. Sarita Devi grew ragi on 2.5 acres, earning Rs. 20,000/acre. Limited tech access, markets, and value addition held her back. Social barriers and low awareness restricted her growth. She needed a change to boost her income. Like many rural women, she struggled with restricted mobility, limited exposure to markets, and lack of confidence in venturing into entrepreneurship. These challenges created a pressing need for change and innovation in her livelihood practices.

Catalyst of Change

She joined Maa Bhubaneswari Mahila Mandal in 2016. KVK Ranchi's programs inspired her to explore food processing and value addition. She received training in millet processing, packaging, and marketing. KVK provided guidance, tech support, and an oven machine. This boosted her confidence to become an entrepreneur. These institutional interventions played a crucial role in building her confidence, enhancing her technical skills, and linking her to markets. The support from KVK not only equipped her with the tools to start producing millet-based bakery items and indigenous crop products but also instilled in her the belief that she could become a successful entrepreneur.

Pathway to Progress

She launched Tarun Bakery, making millet-based products like cookies and cakes. She participated in fairs, boosting her reach. She focused on branding, packaging, and quality. Training 250 women, she empowered others and expanded her network. Her products were not only nutritious but also catered to the growing consumer preference for healthy alternatives. To expand her reach, she actively participated in Krishi Melas and fairs organized across Ranchi, Patna, Bhubaneswar, and Delhi. These platforms provided her with exposure to diverse markets and helped her understand consumer preferences.



Highlights

- » Associated with the Self-Help Group engaged in producing millet-based value-added products
- » Established her own bakery unit named Tarun Bakery
- » Mentored 250 farm women in millet value addition and marketing
- » Achieved a turnover of Rs. 13.0 lakhs in previous year
- » cultivation, value-added products, and spawn production

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The adoption of value addition practices brought significant economic benefits. Her income increased by 88 percent compared to the sale of raw ragi. In the financial year 2024–25, her enterprise achieved a turnover of Rs. 13.0 lakhs, a remarkable achievement for a rural woman entrepreneur. The enterprise also generated employment opportunities for other women in her SHG and community, thereby contributing to rural livelihood development.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She received appreciation and awards from the Chief Minister of Jharkhand Sri Hemant Soren for her contribution to women empowerment and agri-food innovation. These recognitions validated her efforts and positioned her as a leader in promoting millet-based entrepreneurship. The impact of her entrepreneurial journey extends beyond economic gains. Her leadership enhanced her decision-making role within her family and community, earning her respect and recognition.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Sarita Devi has emerged as a role model for rural women entrepreneurs, inspiring others to explore opportunities in agri-food systems. She mentored 250 farm women in millet value addition and marketing, thereby creating a ripple effect of empowerment in her community.



[Source: Ajeet Kumar Singh and Vishakha Singh (KVK, Ranchi, Jharkhand)]

78. Transformation of Home-Based Skill into a Sustainable Pickle Processing Enterprise

Profile

Name : Shaik Shakeela
Age : 53 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 7075811517
Address : Vill. Singarayakonda, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh
Enterprise : Pickle and value-added food processing unit (AI Pickles)



Background

Mrs. Shakeela possessed traditional knowledge and experience in preparing pickles, chutneys, and vadiyams. However, her expertise remained confined to household consumption and small-scale informal sales, resulting in irregular and limited income. Despite her strong aspiration for self-employment and economic independence, the absence of formal training, branding, statutory compliance, and organized market access constrained the expansion of her enterprise and restricted income growth.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point came when Mrs. Shakeela approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kandukur, seeking guidance to convert her home-based skill into a viable enterprise. Recognizing her entrepreneurial potential, KVK organized a five-day hands-on skill development training programme on food processing and value addition.

Pathway to Progress

Post training, KVK provided continuous handholding support, which played a crucial role in enterprise establishment. With systematic guidance, Mrs. Shakeela established her food processing



Highlights

- » Skill Transformation: Converted traditional home-based pickle making into a registered food processing enterprise
- » Value Addition: Produces preservative-free pickles, vadiyams, and chutney powders using standardized methods
- » Market Linkages: Products marketed through KVK outlets, Mahila Marts, online platforms, and direct sales
- » Women Empowerment: Generates employment for SHG women and strengthens collective entrepreneurship
- » Income Growth: Achieved a net annual income of Rs. 4.10 Lakh
- » Replicable Model: Demonstrates the effective role of KVK in promoting sustainable women-led agri-enterprises

unit under the brand name “Ai Pickles”, focusing on value addition using locally available raw materials.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Shakeela’s enterprise achieved remarkable outcomes:

- » Net annual income of Rs. 4.10 Lakh
- » Conversion of household skill into a registered food processing enterprise
- » Creation of SHG-based employment opportunities
- » Improved livelihood security and financial stability
- » Enhanced market reach through organized and digital platforms

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Emerged as a confident woman entrepreneur and decision-maker
- » Provided employment opportunities to fellow SHG women
- » Strengthened collective entrepreneurship among rural women
- » Became a role model for women aspiring for self-reliance through value addition

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Shakeela’s success has inspired SHG members and women from nearby areas to explore food processing and value-added enterprises. Her journey demonstrates that traditional skills, when supported by institutional guidance and market linkage, can lead to sustainable income generation and women’s empowerment.



[Source: B. Neeharika and G. Prasad Babu (KVK, Prakasham-2, A.P.)]

79. Empowering Small Farmers through Millet-based Value Addition

Profile

Name : Mekala Kalyani
Age : 33 years
Education : 8th standard
Mobile No : 7799891898
Address : Vill. Kalmalchervu, Garidepally (M), Suryapet, Telangana
Enterprise : Millet-based Value-Added Products



Background

Mrs. Mekala Kalyani, a small farmer from a Scheduled Caste household, had been cultivating paddy on her 5-acre land for over 15 years. Dependence on mono-cropping, increasing cultivation costs, and limited returns resulted in low and unstable household income. Despite her active involvement in labour-intensive farming activities, the income was insufficient to meet family needs, compelling her to work as a daily wage labourer. This highlighted the need for a sustainable, low-drudgery, and income-enhancing livelihood option.

Catalyst of Change

Under the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP), SAIRD-Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Gaddipally identified the entrepreneurial potential of Mrs. Kalyani and provided her with a six-day skill development training programme on millet-based value addition. The training imparted hands-on experience in the preparation of Ragi Laddu, Jowar Murukulu, and millet biscuits, along with capacity building in processing, packaging, branding, marketing, and awareness on the nutritional and health benefits of millets.

Pathway to Progress

With continuous technical guidance and handholding support from KVK, Ms. Kalyani adopted millet-



Highlights

- » Livelihood Diversification: Transition from paddy mono-cropping to millet-based entrepreneurship
- » Value Addition: Production of Ragi Laddu, Jowar Murukulu, and millet biscuits
- » Income Enhancement: Additional income of Rs. 10,000–15,000 per month
- » Women Empowerment: Group-based enterprise involving three rural women
- » Nutritional Security: Increased awareness and consumption of nutrient-rich millets
- » Replicable Model: Demonstrates the impact of SCSP-driven KVK interventions

based value addition as a sustainable alternative livelihood. She mobilized two other rural women to form a three-member group and subsequently established a micro-enterprise named 'Suguna Millets Swagraha Foods'. The group initiated regular production and local marketing of millet-based value-added products, which significantly reduced dependence on wage labour and enhanced livelihood stability.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Kalyani's enterprise resulted in measurable and tangible improvements, including the generation of an additional income of Rs. 10,000–15,000 per month, regular monthly production and sale of approximately 50kg of millet-based value-added products, and effective diversification of household income beyond paddy cultivation. The intervention led to a marked reduction in drudgery and dependence on wage labour, while also enhancing household nutritional security through increased

consumption of millet-based foods.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She developed enhanced confidence, leadership, and decision-making skills through her journey as a rural entrepreneur. She emerged as a role model for women in her village and empowered two additional rural women by establishing a group-based enterprise. Her achievements were formally recognized with the "Best Entrepreneur Award" by NAARM, Hyderabad.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Kalyani's success has inspired women from nearby villages to adopt millet-based value-added enterprises. Her journey demonstrates the potential of SCSP-supported interventions in promoting sustainable livelihoods, nutrition security, and women empowerment.



80. Economic Empowerment of Women Farmers through Value Addition of Traditional Rice Products

Profile

Name : K. Menaka
Age : 40 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 8940238990
Address : Vill. Vanapuram, District- Kallakurichi, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise : Value Addition of Traditional Rice Products



Background

Mrs. Karuppu Kavuni, a traditional rice variety, is cultivated over 331 hectares in Kallakurichi district, rich in antioxidants, dietary fibre, and essential nutrients. However, farmers mostly sell it as raw rice with minimal value addition, limiting income potential and economic empowerment for rural women. KVK Villupuram-II initiated capacity-building programmes to promote entrepreneurship among farm women and SHG members. Mrs. Menaka, a motivated farm woman, approached KVK in 2023 seeking guidance to start a value-added rice products enterprise, unlocking new opportunities for rural women.

Catalyst of Change

KVK Villupuram-II equipped Mrs. Menaka with technical and entrepreneurial skills, including hands-on training on value-added Karuppu Kavuni products like laddu, murukku, and sweets. They also provided guidance on packaging, branding, and marketing, and helped her secure UDYAM Registration and FSSAI License, enabling her to establish a formal and sustainable enterprise

Pathway to Progress

With continuous technical and institutional support from KVK, Mrs. Menaka successfully established a micro-enterprise under the brand 'Bharani Parambariya Suvai Suzhal.' She sources



Highlights:

- » Skill Transformation: Converted traditional rice processing skills into a formal micro-enterprise
- » Value Addition: Produces laddu, murukku, athirasam, mixture, kara boondhi, sweet boondhi, and Karuppu Kavuni Kanji Mix
- » Market Linkages: Products marketed through retail shops, departmental stores, farmers' bazaars, and KVK-organized exhibitions
- » Income Growth: Achieved a net annual income of Rs. 6.63 Lakh
- » Women Empowerment: Provided employment to three local women and trained over 50 SHG members
- » Recognition: Conferred the Best Women Entrepreneur Award by KVK

traditional rice directly from KVK-trained organic farmers, produces value-added products using standardized processing techniques, and markets them through multiple channels, including:

- » Retail shops and departmental stores
- » Farmers' Bazaars in Kallakurichi and Salem
- » KVK-organized exhibitions and fairs

The enterprise has created employment opportunities for three local women, enhanced household income and promoted the use and consumption of traditional rice products within the community.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Menaka's enterprise achieved substantial economic outcomes. By producing traditional rice sweets and savouries, she generated an annual sales turnover of Rs. 9.60 Lakh against an expenditure of Rs. 2.97 Lakh resulting in a net profit of Rs. 6.63 Lakh.

Social/ Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Enhanced confidence, leadership, and entrepreneurial skills
- » Recognized as Best Women Entrepreneur by KVK on International Women's Day in 2024
- » Acted as a resource person for SHGs, training over 50 women in traditional rice value addition
- » Emerged as a role model for rural women entrepreneurs in the district

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Menaka's success has motivated farm women in nearby villages to explore value addition of traditional crops. Her enterprise demonstrates the transformative potential of KVK interventions in promoting women-led micro-enterprises, income diversification, and sustainable livelihoods.



[Source: M. Vimalarani, C. Sharmila Bharathi, and Gayathri Subbiah (KVK, Villupuram-2, T.N.)]

81. Women Mastering Organic Farming from Street Shop to Market

Profile

Name	: P. Sumathi
Age	: 55 years
Education	: 8th standard
Mobile No	: 9486683730
Address	: Vill. Chinnasalem, District-Kallakurichi, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise	: organic farming and Market access



Background

Mrs. Sumathi had been practicing conventional mono-cropping of vegetables and cereals since 2010. The production system was highly dependent on chemical inputs, which led to increased pest and disease incidence, nutrient imbalance, depletion of soil fertility, and escalating costs of cultivation. In addition, bulk arrival of uniform produce in the market resulted in price fluctuations, while reliance on intermediaries significantly reduced profit margins. Collectively, these constraints caused low net income and heightened production risk, highlighting the need for a transition towards a more sustainable, diversified, and market-oriented farming system.

Catalyst of Change

KVK Villupuram-II implemented a structured intervention focusing on organic farming, crop diversification, and market access. They provided capacity-building training, on-farm trials, and demonstrations on organic practices, and facilitated convergence with government schemes. This strengthened sustainability, resilience, and profitability of farming systems, empowering farmers like Mrs. Menaka.

Pathway to Progress

Mrs. Sumathi, with KVK's guidance, shifted to organic farming with a diversified cropping system,



Highlights

- » System Transformation: Shift from conventional mono-cropping to organic diversified farming
- » Market Access: Direct marketing from street markets to organic shops
- » Annual income: Rs. 10.97 Lakh
- » Women Empowerment: Emerged as a trainer, resource person, and role model
- » Sustainability: Improved soil health and reduced external input dependency
- » Horizontal Spread: Motivated adoption of organic farming among neighbouring farmers

integrating annual crops, seasonal veggies, fruits, and flowers. She adopted on-farm organic inputs and direct marketing, supplying to consumers and organic outlets. She's also pursued organic certification.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The adoption of organic diversified farming resulted in:

- » Organic cultivation across 4.26 acres
- » Reduced dependency on chemical inputs
- » Improved soil health and crop performance
- » Regular income generation on daily, weekly, monthly, and annual basis with an average net income of Rs. 10.97 Lakh
- » Elimination of intermediaries through direct marketing

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her success as an organic farmer boosted her confidence and leadership. She invested in assets like irrigation and a well, and now shares her expertise as a resource person and through media platforms, promoting organic farming



Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Sumathi's success has encouraged neighbouring farmers to adopt organic farming practices. Organic input preparation methods have been disseminated within the village, and increased participation of farm women in organic farming and crop diversification initiatives has been observed.



82. Women Empowerment through Mushroom based Entrepreneurship in Tamil Nadu

Profile

Name : R. Sujatha
Age : 47 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 9842583652
Address : Vill. Rajaveethi, District-Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise : Lucky Mushroom Farm



Background

Mrs. Sujatha was a homemaker managing household responsibilities along with her husband and two sons. In 2018, when both her sons moved abroad for higher education, she felt a strong need to become economically independent and contribute to household expenses through a stable source of income. However, she had limited exposure to income-generating activities and lacked technical knowledge about agri-based enterprises. The absence of entrepreneurial skills and suitable guidance restricted her ability to identify and adopt a viable livelihood option.

Catalyst of Change

A turning point came when Mrs. Sujatha learnt about ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Ariyalur, through a friend and approached the KVK seeking guidance. Recognizing her interest and potential, KVK Ariyalur provided structured support through orientation on agri-entrepreneurial opportunities and organized a training programme on mushroom production on 21.04.2018. She received intensive hands-on training in spawn production, oyster mushroom cultivation, and milky mushroom cultivation, along with demonstrations on bed preparation, crop management, and value addition. Continuous technical advisory services, supply of quality spawn, and regular field visits strengthened her confidence to start a mushroom enterprise.



Highlights:

- » Entrepreneurial Transformation: Transitioned from homemaker to successful mushroom entrepreneur
 - » Technology Adoption: Oyster and milky mushroom cultivation using low-cost infrastructure
 - » Value Addition: Production of fresh and value-added mushroom products
 - » Annual income: Rs. 4.80 lakh
 - » Women Empowerment: Generated employment for two rural women and serves as a master trainer
 - » Recognition: Best Female Entrepreneur Award on World Women's Day
 - » Community Impact: Farm developed as a demonstration unit with wide farmer outreach
- » Additional income of Rs. 10,000 per month from milky mushroom cultivation
 - » Achieved a net monthly income of Rs. 40,000

Pathway to Progress

She adopted oyster and milky mushroom cultivation using low-cost and locally available infrastructure. She efficiently utilized vacant rooms on the first floor of her house, adopted sand flooring, gunny bag hanging systems, and installed a simple water sprinkler system to maintain temperature and humidity. She initially started with five oyster mushroom beds and gradually expanded production by reinvesting income and refining her technical skills. In 2020, she diversified into milky mushroom cultivation and, after attending an advanced training programme at TNAU, successfully stabilized production.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her enterprise showed steady growth and tangible outcomes:

- » Expanded from 5 beds to 50 beds per room
- » Scaled up production to 100 kg of oyster mushroom per month
- » Monthly income of Rs. 20,000 from oyster mushroom cultivation

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her mushroom venture brought her economic independence, confidence, and leadership skills. Her farm's success made it a hub for learning, attracting 112+ farmers. She's now a Master Trainer, recognised as Best Female Entrepreneur, and her story's been featured on AIR and in publications.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Sujatha's success with mushroom cultivation has inspired rural women and youth in Ariyalur district, and she now advises farmers across Tamil Nadu, promoting women-led agri-entrepreneurship.



83. Encouraging Women Entrepreneurship through Value Addition in Millets

Profile:

Name : Prema
Age : 53 years
Education : M. Com
Mobile No : 9786990584
Address : Birundavan Nagar, Civil Aerodrum
Post, Coimbatore
Enterprise : Value addition in millets



Background

Mrs. Prema, a postgraduate in commerce and formerly a teacher, aspired to establish an agri-based enterprise during mid-life. Despite her academic background, she lacked practical exposure to food processing technologies, business models, and organized market access. The growing national demand for nutritious millet-based products provided a market opportunity, but she required structured training, technical guidance, and handholding to convert her aspiration into a sustainable enterprise.

Catalyst of Change

ICAR–Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Coimbatore, through its Agri Business School (ABS), recognized Mrs. Prema's potential and provided systematic support via Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDP) and skill development initiatives. She received hands-on training on millet processing and value addition, covering primary and secondary products such as millet flours, malted powders, multi-nutrient mixes, cookies, murukku, laddu, halwa, and ready-to-cook mixes. KVK also provided guidance on packaging, branding, quality control, and marketing, along with continuous technical mentoring and market orientation through exhibitions, fairs, and networking.

Pathway to Progress

She has adopted millet processing technologies to produce a wide range of products including millet noodles, vermicelli, pongal mixes, and gluten-free nutrient-dense foods. She established a household-level millet processing unit and marketed products through gated communities, departmental stores, KVK exhibitions, online platforms, and international exports to Malaysia, Qatar, USA, UK, and Australia.



Highlights:

- » Skill Transformation: Converted academic and professional background into a millet-based agri-enterprise
- » Value Addition: Produces a diverse range of millet products including flours, mixes, ready-to-cook, and extruded items
- » Market Linkages: Marketed through gated communities, departmental stores, KVK fairs, online platforms, and international exports
- » Annual income: Rs. 12.0 lakh
- » Women Empowerment: Provided employment for five local women and trained students and entrepreneurs
- » Recognition: Master Trainer in millet processing; featured on AIR, media platforms, and local press.

confidence, leadership, and technical expertise in millet processing. She was recognized as a Master Trainer for millet processing by ICAR-KVK Coimbatore and featured on All India Radio, Kovai, Your Story platform, and Dinamalar newspaper. She serves as a role model inspiring women, students, and young entrepreneurs to adopt millet-based enterprises.

Influence on other Farmers

Her enterprise inspired SHGs, farm women, and budding entrepreneurs to adopt millet-based value addition, replicate similar enterprises, and explore markets for nutritious, gluten-free products. The model demonstrated scalable and sustainable secondary agriculture through women-led entrepreneurship.

Her unit also functions as a training-cum-practice centre for students, research scholars, and budding entrepreneurs.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Prema's enterprise achieved remarkable outcomes:

- » Produced and marketed over 80 tonnes of millet-based products since 2009
- » Achieved a monthly income of Rs. 1,00,000
- » Provided employment to five women, each earning approximately Rs. 10,000 per month
- » Created a sustainable livelihood and enhanced household income
- » Strengthened millet value chains and promoted nutritional security

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has successfully transitioned from a teaching profession to a full-time agri-entrepreneur, gaining



[Source: P. Gomathi and S. Sureshkumar (KVK, Coimbatore, T.N.)]

84. Organic Farming as a Pathway for Women Empowerment: A Homemaker's Success Story from Puducherry

Profile

Name	: G. Bakkiyavathy
Age	: 55 years
Education	: 10th standard
Mobile No	: 9442793507
Address	: West St, Karikalampakkam, Puducherry
Enterprise	: Organic farming, value addition, and women-led community initiatives



Background

Mrs. Bakkiyavathy, a homemaker aspired to contribute to her family income and community development through agriculture. Like many rural women, she had strong farming knowledge but limited access to income-generating opportunities. Conventional farming, monocropping, and reliance on chemical inputs had led to declining soil health, unstable income, and restricted market access. She needed scientific guidance, skill enhancement, and institutional support to adopt sustainable farming systems and empower other women farmers in her community.

Catalyst of Change

Her transformation began when she engaged with ICAR-KVK Puducherry, which provided structured support through:

- » On-campus and off-campus trainings on organic farming, SRI paddy cultivation, vermicompost, mushroom cultivation, orchids, and value addition of farm produce.
- » Method demonstrations on precision farming, polycropping, and traditional rice varieties.
- » Integrated skill development programmes to groom her as a Master Trainer.
- » Technical backstopping, advisory services, and convergence with line departments.
- » Support for leadership development via Farmers Clubs and SHGs.

Pathway to Progress

Mrs. Bakkiyavathy adopted organic and diversified farming over her 2-acre farm, growing paddy, ragi, groundnut, vegetables, fruits, and flowers. She integrated polycropping, SRI techniques, and



Highlights

- » Skill Transformation: From homemaker to progressive organic farmer and Master Trainer.
- » Sustainable Agriculture: Adopted organic farming, SRI paddy, precision farming, and poly cropping.
- » Market Linkages: Direct marketing of farm produce and value-added products.
- » Income Growth: Stabilized household income and created livelihood opportunities for 150 women.
- » Women Empowerment: Leadership in SHGs, Farmers Clubs, and FPO initiatives.
- » Recognition: Multiple state and district awards for leadership, farming innovation, and women empowerment.

precision farming methods, while directly marketing produce and promoting value addition. She also established a snack shop to market traditional foods prepared from her farm produce. Through continuous guidance and institutional support, she assumed leadership positions in Farmers Clubs, FPOs, and women empowerment initiatives, mentoring hundreds of farmers and SHG members.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Adoption of sustainable and organic farming practices, improving yield and soil health.

- » Direct marketing of farm produce, eliminating middlemen and stabilizing income.
- » Generated livelihood opportunities for herself and fellow SHG members.
- » Motivated neighbouring farmers to adopt SRI, organic farming, and poly-cropping practices.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Bakkiyavathy emerged as a progressive woman farmer and community leader. She became Master Trainer, FPO president, and resource person for farmers' training programmes. She has trained over 2,000 farmers and SHG members and facilitated employment for nearly 150 women. Her achievements have been recognized with multiple awards, including:

- » Best Farmers Club Award (NABARD) – 2001 & 2004
- » Best Woman Award – Junior Chamber of India, Puducherry – 2017
- » Other awards for leadership, innovation, and community contributions



Influence on other Farmers

Her success inspired farm women from Karikalampakkam and surrounding villages to adopt organic farming, polycropping, SRI methods, and value addition of farm produce. She has become a role model for women empowerment, sustainable agriculture, and community development in the region.



[Source: S. Ravi, D. Bommy, V. Prabhu, N. Manimegalai, and K. A. Amalorpavanathan (KVK, Puducherry)]

85. Entrepreneurship Development among Women through Value Addition in Millets

Profile:

Name : Girija
Age : 49 years
Education : 9th standard
Mobile No : 7708976869
Address : Mathur, Krishnagiri District, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise : Giri Traditional Organic Foods



Background

Mrs. Girija, a homemaker was living with her family of five in a rented house. The income earned by her husband was inadequate to meet the growing household expenses, leading to economic hardship. Although the district is well suited for millet cultivation, employment opportunities for rural women remained limited.

Mrs. Girija possessed traditional skills in food preparation and had a strong interest in millet processing. However, the lack of technical knowledge on value addition, preservation, post-harvest technologies, branding, food licensing, and market access restricted her ability to convert her skills into a sustainable income-generating enterprise.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point came when Mrs. Girija approached ICAR–Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Krishnagiri. Recognizing her potential, the KVK provided phased and need-based interventions focusing on capacity building, enterprise development, and continuous technical handholding. She received systematic training on millet-based bakery products, masala powders, dehydrated green leafy vegetable mixes, ready-to-eat foods, and moringa-based products. Support was also extended for branding, labeling, food safety licensing, and participation in exhibitions. Exposure visits to the Centre of Excellence in Millets and IIHR further strengthened her entrepreneurial confidence.

Pathway to Progress

Mrs. Girija adopted scientific millet processing and value addition practices and established her enterprise under the brand name 'Giri Traditional Organic Foods.' She diversified her product range to include millet snacks, instant food mixes, dehydrated leafy vegetable powders, papads, flakes, pickles,



Highlights

- » Value Addition: Produces millet snacks, instant mixes, leafy vegetable powders, papads, flakes, pickles, and traditional food products
- » Enterprise Growth: Established 'Giri Traditional Organic Foods' with FSSAI registration
- » Market Linkages: Products marketed through own outlet, SHGs, exhibitions, fairs, and organic melas
- » Annual income: around Rs. 9.0 Lakh
- » Women Empowerment: Motivated and influenced around 200 rural women
- » Recognition: Recipient of Best Farmer Award 2025 and multiple state and district-level honours

traditional rice varieties, and dhal powders. With support from ICAR–KVK Krishnagiri and convergence with ICAR–IIMR under the SCSP programme, she received millet processing machinery, which significantly increased her production capacity. Direct marketing through her own outlet, SHG networks, district and regional exhibitions, organic fairs, and mango exhibitions strengthened her market linkages.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Girija's enterprise showed steady growth over the years. Her monthly production capacity increased from 20kg to 300kg. The enterprise now generates a gross monthly income of about Rs. 1,20,000 with a net profit of Rs. 75,000 and a benefit–cost ratio of 1.6. This resulted in a significant improvement in household income, financial stability, and livelihood security.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Girija emerged as a successful woman entrepreneur and role model in her community. She gained self-confidence, decision-making ability, and financial independence. Her achievements earned her several awards and recognitions from the Department of Agriculture, Rotary Club of Hosur, Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Kalai Ilakkiya Ara Kattalai, Asia International Culture of Organizations Academy, District Level Mango Exhibition Committee, Regional Agricultural Exhibition (Thiruvannamalai), and the prestigious Best Farmer Award 2025, along with the Naam Alvar Viruthu.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Girija's success inspired nearly 200 rural women in Krishnagiri district to take up millet processing and value addition activities. Through peer learning, SHG networks, and exhibitions, she motivated women to adopt home-based food processing enterprises, enhancing income, nutrition, and self-reliance. Consumer demand for homemade, nutritious millet-based products has also increased in the region.



[Source: T. Sundarraj, S. Poomathi, and S. Senthilkumar (KVK, Krishnagiri, T.N.)]

86. Rural Entrepreneurship through Value Addition in Fish Production

Profile

Name : A. Thommai Innasi
Age : 56 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 9994845657
Address : Vellapatti, Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu
Enterprise : Value-Added Fish Products



Background

Mrs. Thommai Innasi is a fisherwoman from Vellapatti village and a member of the Sorajini Women Self Help Group consisting of 18 fisherwomen. Most members of the group were engaged as salt pan workers and involved in small-scale fishing activities. Although the group had access to abundant fishery resources such as fish, prawns, and crabs, these were sold in raw form at low prices, resulting in poor income and limited livelihood security. The major constraints included lack of technical knowledge on scientific fish processing and value addition, absence of hygienic handling and packaging practices, no branding or organized marketing system, and heavy dependence on local traders. Despite the availability of resources, income levels remained low and inconsistent.

Catalyst of Change

A turning point occurred when Mrs. Thommai Innasi approached ICAR-SCAD Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Thoothukudi, seeking guidance to improve income through fisheries-based enterprises. Recognizing the potential of value addition in fisheries, the KVK initiated focused capacity-building interventions for Mrs. Innasi and her SHG members. She received hands-on training on scientific processing and value addition of fishery products, hygienic handling, quality control, packaging, labelling, and branding. Exposure-cum-study visits to EDII-MPBIF and the Fisheries College and Research Institute (FC&RI), Thoothukudi, further enhanced her technical knowledge and entrepreneurial vision.

Pathway to Progress

She has adopted scientific fish processing techniques and diversified production into a wide range of value-added products, including prawn pickle, massi pickle, fish pickle, fish cutlets, fish fingers, fish nuggets, and dry fish. Solar drying technology was introduced to improve product quality and shelf



Highlights

- » Resource Utilization: Converted locally available fishery resources into high-value products
- » Value Addition: Produces fish pickles, cutlets, nuggets, fingers, and dried fish
- » Market Linkages: Products marketed through retail outlets, exhibitions, and online platforms
- » Income Growth: Annual turnover of approximately Rs. 25 lakh
- » Women Empowerment: 12 SHG members earning Rs. 45,000–60,000 per month
- » Recognition: Recipient of Best Entrepreneur Awards from reputed institutions

life. With facilitation from ICAR–SCAD KVK, the women SHG established a fish processing enterprise under the brand name “QUEEN.” A dedicated marketing outlet was set up at the Collectorate Campus with financial support from Mahalir Thittam, Thoothukudi. The SHG was also linked with banking institutions to avail credit support of Rs. 3.50 lakhs for enterprise expansion. Participation in district, state, and national-level exhibitions and entry into online marketing platforms strengthened market access.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The enterprise transitioned from household-level activities to organized group-based production. Raw fish sales were replaced with high-value processed products, leading to improved income realization. The enterprise achieved an annual turnover of approximately Rs. 25 lakhs, generating employment for five women and two men in processing and marketing activities.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She emerged as a confident rural woman entrepreneur and leader within her SHG. Her success brought social recognition and enhanced decision-making capacity. She received the Best Entrepreneur Award from the Fisheries College and Research Institute (FC&RI), Thoothukudi, the Department of Fisheries, and Kamaraj College, Thoothukudi, acknowledging her contribution to women-led fisheries entrepreneurship.

Influence on other Farmers

Out of 18 trained SHG members, 12 women are now earning between Rs. 45,000 and 60,000 per month. The success of the “QUEEN” brand motivated other fisherwomen in nearby villages to adopt fish value addition enterprises. Mrs. Thommai Innasi’s initiative significantly improved the economic and social status of fisherwomen and enhanced the visibility of women-led fisheries enterprises in the district.



[Source: S. Sumathi, T. Masanaselvam, and V. Palanichamy (KVK, Thoothukudi, T.N.)]

87. A Journey of Entrepreneurship through Value Addition and Processing

Profile

Name : Vemuri Lalitha
Age : 54 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 8985334777
Address : Palem (V), Ghantasala (M), Krishna District
Enterprise : Value-added and dehydrated food products



Background

Mrs. Vemuri Lalitha, a progressive rural woman from Ghantasala Palem village, had a keen interest in food processing and value addition. Despite her educational qualification, she initially lacked exposure to scientific food processing practices and enterprise management. The absence of technical knowledge on dehydration techniques, quality control, packaging, labeling, branding, and marketing limited her ability to convert local agricultural produce into a profitable livelihood option. At the same time, the local markets in Krishna district had limited availability of quality value-added and dehydrated food products, indicating a strong potential for small-scale food processing enterprises. Recognizing this opportunity, Mrs. Lalitha aspired to establish a sustainable income-generating unit but required technical guidance and institutional support.



Highlights:

- » Value Addition: Converts cereals, millets, fruits, and vegetables into diversified processed products
- » Enterprise Development: Established 'Sri Ramana Foods' with FSSAI registration
- » Income Growth: Net annual income of Rs. 3.25 lakh
- » Market Linkages: Products marketed in local markets across Krishna district
- » Women Empowerment: Acts as a resource person for SHGs and rural women
- » KVK Support: Continuous capacity building, mentoring, and technical backstopping

Catalyst of Change

The turning point in her entrepreneurial journey came when she approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Ghantasala. The KVK identified her potential and provided structured capacity-building support through skill-oriented vocational trainings and demonstrations. During the period 2021–2024, she received intensive training on scientific processing and dehydration techniques, value addition in cereals, millets, fruits, and vegetables, quality control measures, hygienic handling, packaging, labelling, branding, and marketing strategies. Exposure visits to successful enterprises and participation in exhibitions further strengthened her confidence and entrepreneurial outlook.

Pathway to Progress

With continuous technical backstopping from KVK Ghantasala, Smt. Lalitha established a small-scale food processing unit under the brand name 'Sri Ramana Foods.' She obtained FSSAI registration to

ensure statutory compliance and product credibility. She diversified her product portfolio to more than 15 value-added and dehydrated food products, including wafers, papads, chilli powder, turmeric powder, millet-based products, and cereal-based foods. Production was mainly oriented towards local markets across Krishna district, ensuring consistent demand and regular income.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The enterprise gradually stabilized with systematic production planning and quality assurance. The unit achieved an annual production of about 3,250 kg of processed products. With an annual cost of production of approximately Rs. 13.00 lakh, the enterprise generated a gross income of Rs. 16.25 lakh and a net income of Rs. 3.25 lakh per year. This steady income significantly improved her household economic security and strengthened her confidence as a rural woman entrepreneur.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She emerged as a successful role model for rural women in food processing enterprises. Her entrepreneurial journey earned recognition and support from local leadership, including facilitation by the Hon'ble MLA, Sri Madali Buddha Prasad, Avanigadda Constituency. She continues to receive mentoring and technical guidance from KVK Ghantasala. Beyond income generation, she actively shares her knowledge and experience with other SHG members and farm women, promoting replication of value addition and dehydration technologies.

Influence on other Farmers

Her success inspired several rural women and SHG members in Krishna district to explore value addition enterprises. By demonstrating the economic viability of food processing, she contributed to enhanced awareness on quality, hygiene, branding, and market-oriented production among the farming community.

88.

Subsistence to Sustainability: A Tribal Woman's Journey of Innovation in Intensive Farming from Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Profile

Name : Esther Reginal
Age : 45 years
Education : 5th standard
Mobile No : 9531994113
Address : Big Lapathy, Nicobar District,
Andaman & Nicobar Islands
Enterprise : Intensive diversified farming (Vegetable cultivation with field crops)



Background

Mrs. Esther Reginal, a tribal woman farmer from Car Nicobar Island, was stuck in a cycle of low-input, low-output subsistence farming. She grew seasonal veggies and coconuts using traditional methods, but productivity was poor, and income was irregular. Her challenges were plenty:

- » Small landholding and lack of scientific crop planning
- » Limited access to quality seeds, modern machinery, and tech knowledge
- » Geographical isolation made it hard to get inputs and exposure to new tech
- » Marketing options were limited, forcing reliance on local middlemen
- » Social and gender constraints confined her role to labour, with limited decision-making power
- » Financial constraints and lack of institutional credit hindered investment in better practices

This situation needed a systematic, women-centred intervention to transform her farm into a sustainable, income-generating enterprise.

Catalyst of Change

The transformation of Mrs. Esther Reginal's farm from subsistence to a profitable intensive farming model was made possible through systematic planning, strong institutional support, and timely technological interventions, primarily facilitated by KVK Nicobar under ICAR.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted improved crop varieties such as CIARI-1 and CIARI-2 Brinjal, Pusa Sweet Corn and Pusa Vishal green gram along with climate-smart practices including organic composting, bio-input application, crop rotation, and integrated pest management. She implemented an intensive diversified



Highlights

- » Cultivates improved crop varieties such as CIARI-1 and CIARI-2 Brinjal, Pusa Sweet Corn, and Pusa Vishal Green Gram.
- » Climate smart practices including organic composting, bio-input application, crop rotation and integrated pest management.
- » Implemented an intensive diversified cropping system supported by mechanization using power tiller and power weeder.
- » Direct market linkage through local selling improved price realization.
- » She influenced other women to adopt scientific farming practices.

cropping system supported by mechanization using power tiller and power weeder which reduced drudgery and improved timeliness of operations. Direct market linkage through local selling improved price realization and proper post-harvest handling enhanced quality of the produce. Those innovations making her farming more profitable and sustainable, strengthening nutritional security of household along with generation of seasonal employment for local women.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Her efforts led to significant improvements:

- » Reduce cost of cultivation.
- » Increased crop productivity by about 35-50 percent.
- » Increased net income from Rs. 28,400 to Rs. 68,000 per annum

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The transformation also led to strong social and personal empowerment. She plays a key decision-making role in her family's farming and financial matters. Her success has earned her respect and recognition within the community and she has emerged as a role model for tribal women in Car Nicobar.

Influence on other Farmers

Her now actively mentors other women farmers during training programs and field visits. Her leadership has encouraged other women SHG members to adopt scientific farming practices, creating a ripple effect of confidence, cooperation and innovation among rural women farmers.



89. Strengthening Rural Livelihoods through Value Addition in Mushroom

Profile

Name : Anjali Bose Das
Age : 35 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 76799 69828
Address : Village-Dhandugach, District-Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal
Enterprise : Mushroom farming, value addition



Background

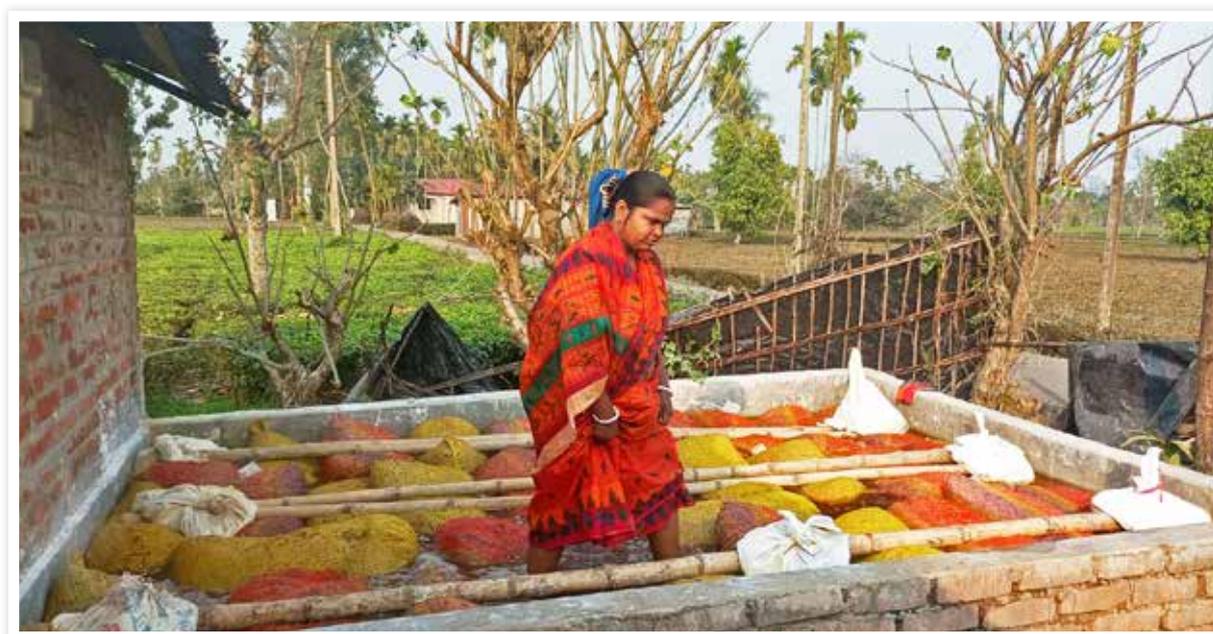
Mrs. Anjali Bose Das Primarily, she showed her interest in mushroom farming to cater family needs as her husband was a migratory worker and no regular income source was there. A group of five women of village Dhandugach of Chopra block who were the members of Pragati Mushroom Farmers' Group showed tremendous interest in value added item preparation of mushrooms as they were selling fresh mushrooms and also asked for value added items from some customers and also wanted solution to problem of mushroom disposal during peak festive season or sudden strikes in hilly region when demand of fresh mushroom is less. In this context, which KVK decided for their handholding and provided 15 days hands-on training to a batch of 16 farmwomen.

Catalyst of Change

Based on the training imparted from which KVK, Pragati members gained confidence and initiated their value- added mushroom venture from a small loan of Rs. 25,000 from FIG (farmers' interest group) and purchased minimum required items like tumblers, weighing machine and packing material etc. With a modest start and a Rs. 25,000 loan, they've upgraded to a state-of-the-art processing unit, equipped with a tray dryer and vacuum packing machine. A well- equipped mushroom processing unit has been established in Dhanugach villiage under ARYA project. Their perseverance and KVK's guidance have boosted their confidence, showing a path to other aspiring women farmers.

Pathway to Progress

Initially she has used her own savings as well as small loans from mushroom society to establish a small- scale unit. In the meantime, she has got input support from ARYA Project to establish well



Highlights

- » Establishment of mushroom processing unit
- » Master trainer
- » Creating 380-430 Man-days yearly
- » Annual income: about Rs 5.0 lakh
- » Other innovative move like moringa leaf and pod powder

equipped mushroom Processing unit and this was the main turning point for her business. Mrs Anjali Bose's mushroom business is now flourishing. She started small, bootstrapping with savings and a loan from her mushroom society. A subsidized loan Rs. 5.0 lakh under PMEGP further boosted her venture. Now, she's a recognized agri-entrepreneur, crafting value-added products like mushroom pickle and powder with FSSAI certification. Her products are a success at "Sunday Haat" and online via Kisan Cart, WhatsApp, and Facebook. She's a Master Trainer, empowering

others and creating 380 man-days of employment yearly. As a proud member of Ma Laxmi Mushroom Society, she's inspiring a community of 120+ farmers. With UPI payment facilities and digital marketing, her business is rising.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Anjali and her group's mushroom farming is now yielding very good result making a real game-changer. With KVK's training, they are getting a 10.42% yield boost and doubling profits with value-added products and earning an annual income of about Rs 5.0 lakh. Eco-friendly methods cut cultivation costs by 25%, saving Rs. 5,000 per unit and Rs. 3,500 on labour. Drudgery-reducing tool/small equipment like chaff cutters and steamers are making life easier, generating 380-430 man-days yearly, and they are saving 15% on daily vegetable expenses by using mushroom in their daily diet.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Anjali Bose's mushroom farming venture has garnered significant media attention and recognition. Her awards and certifications include: Progressive Women Farmer Award (2022) at the International Symposium on Minor Fruits, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants; Certificate of Appreciation (2023) from SDO, Islampur; Progressive Farmer Award (2020) from Directorate of Extension Education, UBKV etc.

Influence on other Farmers

She has become a role model for women empowerment and self-sustainability. Her journey encouraged other women to explore mushroom farming.



[Source: Sharma, A. and Sarkar, S. (KVK, Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal)]

90. Crafting Success from Coconut Shells: The Inspiring Journey of Women Entrepreneurship

Profile

Name : Rama Guha
Age : 45 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 9531917233
Address : Swadeshnagar, North and Middle Andaman, Andaman and Nicobar Islands
Enterprise : Rose Self Help Group (Coconut Shell handicraft, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry)



Background

In the interiors of Swadeshnagar, North & Middle Andaman, Mrs Rama and her husband were primarily engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry with a focus on cattle rearing, goatery, and backyard poultry farming. The income generated from these activities was modest but consistent, enabling her to manage household needs and support her son's education. In 2017, she took a significant step forward by forming a Self-Help Group (SHG) named "ROSE." This provided her with a collective platform to work with other women, exchange ideas, and explore new avenues of income. At this stage, her livelihood was still dependent on traditional farm-based activities.

Catalyst of Change

A new opportunity came her way when she enrolled in a 6-day vocational training on Coconut Shell Based Handicraft for SHGs, organized by ICAR-KVK, North & Middle Andaman in collaboration with the Coconut Development Board (CDB), Sri Vijaya Puram at Swadeshnagar GP. The training introduced her to the concept of using coconut shells, which is a readily available local resource to create handicraft items of aesthetic and functional value. She not only acquired technical skills but also the confidence to diversify her livelihood activities.

Pathway to Progress

Mrs. Rama Guha's coconut shell handicraft business took off after she showcased her products at ICAR-CIARI Kisan Mela 2025, gaining visibility and appreciation. Her products were then displayed at the 'AVSAR' outlet at Veer Savarkar International Airport, Sri Vijaya Puram, widening her reach



Highlights

- » Traditional farming with skill-based enterprise to build a sustainable livelihood.
- » Formed Rose SHG and enrolled in coconut shell-based handicraft venture with support from KVK & Coconut Development Board.
- » Annual income: about 5.40 lakh
- » Produced coconut shell handicraft. She encouraged other women in North and Middle Andaman.

beyond her village. With support from ICAR-KVK N & M Andaman, she has achieved economic stability and created an identity for herself

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Mrs. Guha's efforts led to significant improvements:

- » Successfully managing her two enterprises
- » Improved productivity and crop yield.
- » Agriculture & Animal Husbandry activities provide about Rs. 30,000 per month.
- » Coconut shell handicraft venture provides about Rs. 15,000 per month

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Guha's efforts have been recognized at various platforms, including the awards at district-level. These accolades not only acknowledge her hard work but also encourage other women SHGs in the region to explore similar opportunities.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Rama Guha's story is an example of how rural women can move beyond subsistence farming into diversified income-generating activities. Today, she is widely seen as a role model for women empowerment and self-sustainability in N & M Andaman. Her journey encouraged other SHG members to explore new skill-based ventures. Such initiatives highlight how small interventions, when combined with determination, can pave the way for self-sustainability, self-employment and meaningful socio-economic transformation.



[Source: Kumar, M., Sharma, Y. and Sundar, J. (KVK, North & Middle Andaman, Andaman & Nicobar Islands)]

91. Cultivating Prosperity through Intergrated Farming System

Profile

Name	: Rubi Mandal
Age	: 39 years
Education	: Higher Secondary
Mobile No	: 9832133554
Address	: Galsi-II, Purba Bardhaman District, West Bengal
Enterprise	: Integrated Farming System (IFS) – Black Rice, Livestock (Goats, Ducks, Cattle, Poultry), Value Addition (Rice Powder, Papad & Pulses Chunks), Horticulture (Mango, Lemon, Vegetables)



Background

Mrs. Rubi Mandal, a determined small-scale woman farmer from Galsi-II, faced severe challenges with traditional rice monocropping on her limited 1.6012 ha of land (0.1334 ha owned and 1.4678 ha leased). Her annual income was just Rs. 35,000, barely enough to meet household food needs. Low productivity (Rs. 15,000-20,000 net), exploitation by middlemen (Rs. 2,330/quintal), high chemical input costs (Rs. 3,500/ha), and gender barriers restricting access to credit and seeds trapped her in poverty and food insecurity.

Catalyst of Change

She transformation began through a 5-7-year partnership with KVK Burdwan (ICAR-CRIJAF). She received comprehensive IFS training, including rice cultivation, organic input production (such as vermicompost and livestock management), and value addition. KVK helped her obtain an MSME loan for a FSSAI-certified rice processing unit, organic certification, and direct market linkages.

Pathway to Progress

- » Rubi adopted diversified IFS across 1.6012 ha of fully irrigated land:
- » Phase 1: Black rice (0.2668 ha, Rs. 28000/- per q), 10 goats + 15 ducks, vermicompost unit
- » Phase 2: Gobindbhog rice, organic mustard-sesame, mango orchard (20 trees)
- » Phase 3: FSSAI processing unit, Digital marketing, mentoring 20+ farmers



Highlights

- » IFS Model: 100% organic across 1.6 ha – Black rice (Rs.3.35 lakh), Gobindobhog rice, livestock (36 animals)
- » Value- Addition: FSSAI rice powder/ Papad unit and Pulses Chunks selling through Digital Marketing
- » Circular Economy: Livestock manure Jeevamrut 30% input savings premium pricing
- » Market Innovation: Self-branding, Labelling and packaging, farmer mela stalls (6/year)
- » Women Leadership: Mentors SHG/FPO, 90% women now in farm decisions (vs 40% before)
- » Annual income: about Rs.7.40 lakh
- » Community Transformation: More than 25 farmers adopted technologies, Rs.7.3+ lakh Income.

- » She leads the Farmer Interest Group (comprising 25 farmers) and the Women's SHG (15 women, with a collective income of Rs.10-12 lakh) and has established a village seed bank for the conservation of Gobindobhog and Black Rice.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The diversified farming model delivered transformative results. For rural women farmers, boosting annual income from Rs. 35,000/- to an impressive Rs. 7,39,520/-. Profits surged across segments, with field crops yielding Rs.637300/- at a benefit-cost (B: C) ratio of 2.38, livestock contributing Rs. 74,220/- at 2.77 B: C, and value addition adding Rs. 15,500/-. Productivity increased from 40 quintals in monocropping to 179 quintals in diversified systems, representing a 348% gain while input costs decreased by 30% from Rs. 3,500/- per hectare to Rs. 2,450/- per hectare through the adoption of organic practices. The overall B:C ratio improved from 0.95 to 2.36 (149% increase), and employment expanded from one person to 10-12 women labourers, fostering

empowerment and sustainable livelihoods.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » KVK Star Farmer (2025), IARI Innovative Farmer nominee (2025)
- » FIG Convener (25 farmers), SHG Chairperson (15 women)
- » Resource Person – Digital Marketing, Organic Farming, Value Addition of products, Family: Primary earner (More than 50% household income earner)
- » State Govt. Trainer of Digital Marketing and Value Addition of Products
- » Certified Organic production of Rice and Organic fertiliser and insecticides
- » Certificate of excellence from State Bank of India.

Influence on other Farmers

- » Mrs. Rubi's IFS model created a ripple effect across Galsi-II.
- » More than 20 farmers adopted black rice (Rs. 2.8 lakh additional block income); 12 women started value addition (Rs. 1.8 lakh collective income);
- » Many farms transitioned to organic inputs (30-40% cost savings);
- » 6 farmers adopted livestock integration (Rs. 2.5 lakh income);
- » Total community impact: More than 25 farmers joined Mrs. Rubi and earned lakhs of additional annual income of women, leading women empowerment across 5 villages.



92. Backyard to Business through Piggery-based Entrepreneurship

Profile

Name : Hatorki Basumatary
Age : 34 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 6001513110
Address : Village-Taktara, District-Kokrajhar, Assam
Enterprise : Piggery



Background

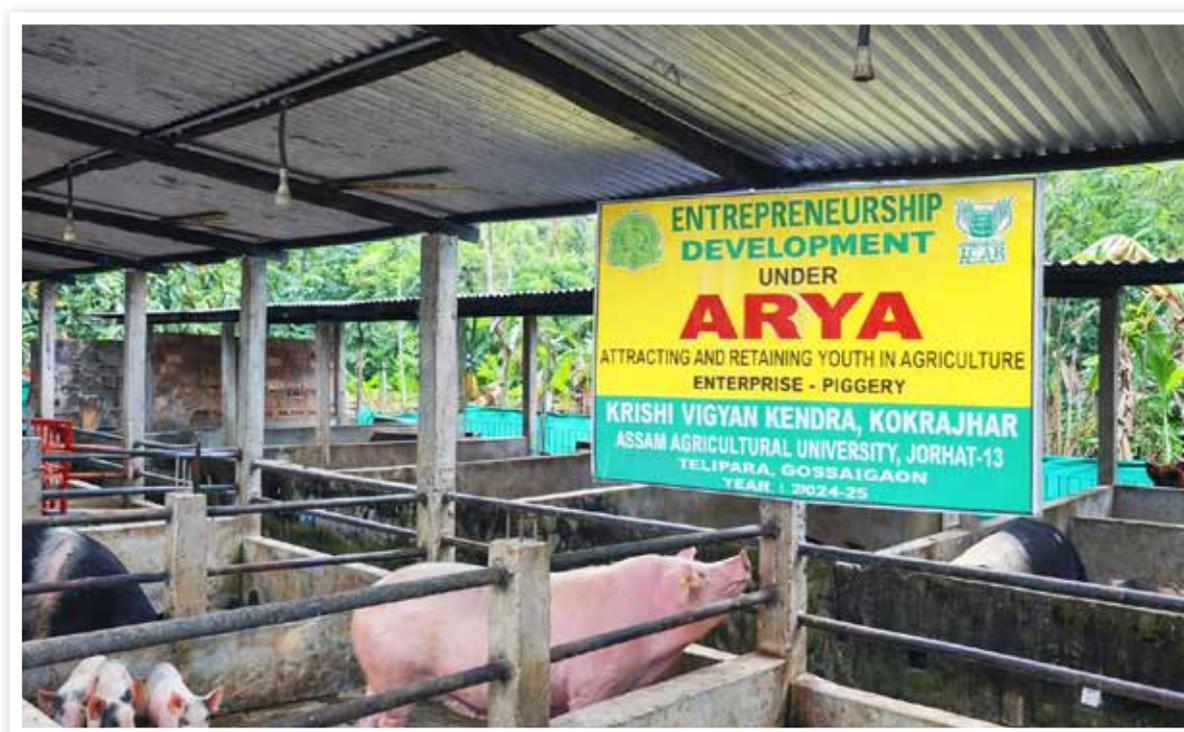
Mrs. Hatorki followed traditional livestock rearing with low productivity and limited income, facing constraints such as lack of structured training, scientific knowledge, quality inputs and market access. Social and gender barriers also made it difficult to visualize piggery as a sustainable commercial venture, and resources for expansion were scarce.

Catalyst of Change

Recognizing her potential, KVK Kokrajhar became the key institutional catalyst in reshaping her journey under the ARYA (Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture) project. Through structured training, demonstrations, continuous technical advisory and knowledge support in breeding sow management, farm economics, and input planning, the KVK enabled her to convert her dream into reality. With mentoring and capacity building, she shifted from subsistence livestock rearing to a scalable and income-driven pig breeding enterprise, emerging as one of the leading women entrepreneurs in the district.

Pathway to Progress

Her pathway to progress was driven by adopting scientific breeding sow management instead of traditional random breeding, along with assured pricing and market linkage for piglets.



Highlights

- » Expansion of Scientific Piggery Enterprise: Piggery unit scaled from 3 breeding sows producing 24 piglets (2022-23) to 8 sows producing 72 piglets (2024-25) to 16 sows in 2025-26.
- » Substantial Increase in Profitability: Net profit increased sharply from Rs. 39,300 in the first year to Rs.2.25 lakh in 2024-25.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » The growth of her enterprise is evident in its steady scale-up—from an initial 3 breeding sows yielding 24 piglets in 2022-23, to 8 sows producing 72 piglets in 2024-25, with further expansion to 16 breeding sows during 2025-26.
- » 2022-23: Earned a gross return of Rs.1.05 lakh with a net profit of Rs. 39,300 from piggery enterprise.
- » 2024-25: Gross return increased to Rs.3.45 lakh with a net profit of Rs.2.25 lakh, reflecting significant profitability growth.
- » Established a demand-responsive pricing model of Rs. 4,500-Rs.5,000 per piglet, demonstrating the

economic viability of scientific pig breeding.

Social & Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Beyond economic success, Hatorki gained strong social and personal empowerment. Her entrepreneurial identity brought her recognition and respect in family and society, improving her role in decision-making and inspiring rural women and youth to adopt livestock farming as a sustainable business venture. She has now become a local symbol of women empowerment in agri-food systems, showing how science-led interventions, structured extension support, and market linkage can fuel rapid scaling in livestock enterprises.

Influence on other Farmers

Her journey continues to influence neighbouring farmers by proving that pig breeding can evolve into a low-maintenance, high-return rural enterprise when supported with scientific guidance and organized institutional mentoring.



[Source: Muzaharul Islam and Porna Sarma (KVK, Kokrajhar, Assam)]

93. Household Practice to Vermicompost-based Green Enterprise

Profile

Name : Jonali Chakraborty
Age : 40 years
Education : M.A.
Mobile No : 9706912880
Address : Village- Basugaon, District- Chirang, Assam
Enterprise : Vermicompost Production



Background

Mrs. Jonali initially had only small-scale household vermicompost production skills. She faced limited technical knowledge, lack of structured training, and poor access to markets, which kept her income minimal despite her efforts. Traditional practices could not scale, and she struggled to make vermicomposting commercially viable.

Catalyst of Change

The catalyst for change was her participation in a vermicompost training programme conducted by Krishi Vigyan Kendra Chirang in 2019, where she gained practical knowledge on scientific bed design, earthworm management, and organic input production. This was reinforced through continuous advisory support on production planning, quality enhancement, and marketing strategies. Additionally, institutional linkages facilitated with nurseries, government departments, and local vendors significantly improved her market access and strengthened the long-term sustainability of her enterprise.

Pathway to Progress

She strengthened market presence by branding her products under 'Sanchayita Enterprise' and adopted structured production schedules, quality control measures, and improved packaging techniques, which enabled consistent output and successful commercial sales.



Highlights

- » Enterprise Expansion: Trained by KVK Chirang in 2019, she scaled vermicompost production from 2 to 20 tanks, branded as 'Sanchayita Enterprise'.
- » Income Growth and Market Linkages: Annual net income increased from Rs. 62,000 to Rs. 5.15 lakh with strong market linkages.
- » Employment Generation and Recognition: Generated employment for local women, won 1st Prize at Tejaswini Assam Ideathon 2024, and now mentors others.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Started with just two vermicompost tanks producing 35 quintals in 2020, and steadily expanded to 20 tanks with an annual output of nearly 300 quintals by 2023. Net income increased steadily from Rs. 62,000 in 2020 to about Rs. 5.15 lakh per year by 2023, indicating significant productivity and income enhancement.
- » Established strong market linkages through regular supply of vermicompost to nurseries, government departments, and local farmers.
- » Ensured stable and sustained demand for vermicompost through institutional and local markets.
- » Generated part-time employment for 2–3 local women during peak production periods, supporting community livelihoods.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She gained state-level recognition by winning the 1st Prize at the Tejaswini Assam Ideathon 2024, showcasing her success in innovation and entrepreneurship. Her achievements have inspired local women and youth to adopt scientific vermicompost production as a viable income-generating activity. She also actively mentors women farmers in her community, fostering self-reliance and promoting sustainable livelihoods.



Influence on other farmers

Her success demonstrates to other farmers that scientific vermicompost production can be scaled into a profitable enterprise with proper training, branding, and market linkages. By mentoring peers and showcasing tangible income growth, she motivates farmers and rural women to adopt improved practices and pursue vermicomposting as a sustainable livelihood option.



94. Integrated Farming System for prosperity in Arunachal Pradesh

Profile

Name	: Chochi Meyor
Age	: 57 years
Education	: Primary education
Mobile No	: 9233631646
Address	: Village- Kaho, District- Anjaw, Arunachal Pradesh
Enterprise	: Integrated Farming System



Background

She initially practiced traditional subsistence farming. Like most women farmers in her region, she faced multiple challenges such as low productivity, lack of access to modern agricultural technologies, limited market linkages and minimal exposure to scientific cultivation methods. With no education and scarce financial resources, her family's income and food security largely depended on low-yield traditional crops. Gender-related barriers and remoteness of the area further restricted her opportunities for agricultural advancement.

Catalyst of Change

Her transition to sustainable farming was enabled through continuous technical support from KVK Anjaw, which provided hands-on trainings, field demonstrations, and timely access to improved seeds, quality inputs, and livestock units. Under KVK guidance, she adopted improved crop varieties, scientific poultry, piggery, and goatery management, along with drip irrigation and bamboo polyhouse cultivation.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted an integrated farming model combining millets, maize, vegetables, poultry, pigs, and goats for steady income and nutrition. With KVK guidance, she set up a low-cost bamboo polyhouse and drip irrigation, enabling off-season vegetable production and efficient water use. She recycled livestock waste as organic manure in her Nutri-garden, improving soil health, cutting input costs, and reducing chemical fertilizer dependence. She further diversified into high-value crops like tomato,



Highlights

- » Adoption of Integrated and Scientific Farming Practices: Adopted an integrated farming system with crops, vegetables, livestock, protected cultivation, and micro-irrigation for sustainable and diversified income.
- » Enhancement in Farm Productivity and Income: Achieved a 120% increase in farm productivity and enhanced annual income to Rs. 2.05 lakh, ensuring economic stability.
- » Resource Recycling and Nutritional Security: Practiced recycling of farm and livestock waste into organic manure, improving soil health, reducing input costs, and enhancing household nutrition and food security.
- » Women Empowerment and Leadership: Emerged as a progressive and role model woman farmer in Anjaw district, generating family employment and inspiring other women farmers.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Through her dedication and farming success, she has emerged as a role model for women farmers in her community. She now plays an active role in household and farm-level decision-making, demonstrates growing leadership, and motivates other women to adopt improved and scientific farming practices, earning recognition and respect within her family and society.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Chochi Meyor has emerged as a source of inspiration for neighbouring farmers, especially rural women, by demonstrating the benefits of integrated and scientific farming. Her success has encouraged others to adopt diversified, climate-resilient, and eco-friendly farming systems for improved income, nutrition, and long-term livelihood.

chilli, pumpkin, and cauliflower, significantly improving farm productivity, produce quality, and household nutrition.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Achieved an annual income of Rs. 2.05 lakh through adoption of integrated and scientific farming practices.
- » Recorded an overall 120% increase in farm productivity, resulting in higher output and improved produce quality.
- » Recycled livestock waste and farm residues into organic manure, reducing input costs.
- » Minimized dependency on chemical fertilizers through efficient resource recycling.
- » Improved household nutrition and food security through diversified farm enterprises.
- » Generated continuous employment for family members, strengthening livelihood security and self-reliance.



95. Biodiversity Conservation to Rural Prosperity: A Successful Journey of an Entrepreneur from Assam

Profile

Name : Jyoti Rekha Tamuli
Age : 49 years
Education : Master Degree
Mobile No : 69005 65991
Address : Village-Kathalbari, District-Jorhat, Assam
Enterprise : Nursery management, eri silkworm farming, agroforestry and Integrated Farming System



Background

Kathalbari village, like many rural pockets of Assam, traditionally depended on mono-cropping and limited on-farm enterprises, resulting in seasonal income, underutilization of natural resources and limited employment opportunities—particularly for women. Despite possessing fertile land and rich biodiversity, the absence of organized nursery systems, scientific agroforestry practices and value-based enterprises restricted income growth. Women's participation in entrepreneurial decision-making and access to technology and markets also remained limited.

Catalyst of Change

Jyotirekha Tamuli envisioned transforming traditional farming into a diversified, sustainable and income-oriented agri-enterprise. Continuous technical guidance, capacity building and advisory support from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jorhat played a pivotal role in strengthening her skills in nursery management, agroforestry, integrated farming and conservation of indigenous plant resources. Exposure visits, training programmes and market facilitation enabled her to adopt scientific practices and expand the enterprise in a phased and sustainable manner.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted climate-smart and space-efficient nursery innovations to scale her enterprise. She introduced a high-density planting of Assam lemon cuttings for rooting (3–4 cm spacing instead of 30×30 cm), resulting in production of more cuttings per unit area. Unutilized citrus seeds were converted into quality sapling production, creating a new business model with strong market demand. She also utilized naturally regenerated agar seedlings to develop 0.67 ha of barren land into an agar



Highlights

- » Adoption of Innovative Nursery and Agroforestry Practices: Introduced innovative, space-efficient nursery and agroforestry practices, including high-density Assam lemon and large-scale Agarwood sapling production.
 - » High Income through Integrated Farming System: Achieved high and stable income through an integrated farming system, with an annual gross income of about Rs. 39.38 lakh.
 - » Employment Generation and Community Empowerment: Empowered women and youth by generating employment, mentoring new entrepreneurs and strengthening local market linkages.
- » Eri silkworm rearing supplemented income and supported livelihood diversification.
 - » The integrated farming system resulted in an annual gross income of about Rs. 39.38 lakh with a net income of Rs. 23.63 lakh, reflecting improved productivity, income stability, and economic resilience.

agroforestry block and now produces and sells nearly 1 lakh agarwood saplings annually across the North-East. Her enterprises ensure risk-proof income, generates employment for rural women, and promotes collective action by linking youth and women growers to assured markets through her nursery.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Achieved productivity and income enhancement through efficient integration of multiple farm and allied enterprises.
- » Paddy cultivation yielded about 55 quintals.
- » Nursery of minor fruits and medicinal plants generated a net income of Rs. 3.75 lakh.
- » Large-scale Agar sapling production provided a net income of Rs. 9.45 lakh.
- » Nursery of fruits, vegetables, ornamental plants, and flowers contributed a net income of Rs. 6.88 lakh.
- » Agroforestry plantation added high profitability with a net income of Rs. 2.80 lakh.

Social & Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Ms. Jyotirekha Tamuli's entrepreneurial journey has empowered her socially and personally, strengthening her leadership, decision-making role and recognition within the community. She has emerged as a role model by mentoring women and youth farmers in sustainable and innovative farming practices. Her contributions to horticulture and conservation were recognized with an award on Mahila Kisan Diwas 2021 by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jorhat, inspiring others to adopt agri-based livelihoods.

Influence on other Farmers

Her achievements have motivated youth and women to engage in Agar seedling production, thereby broadening participation in agroforestry-based entrepreneurship. Prokriti Nursery has emerged as a reliable hub for quality planting material, supporting five nearby nurseries and providing assured market linkages to local growers, which has strengthened the regional agri-food value chain. Through this model, awareness of biodiversity conservation, nursery entrepreneurship and agroforestry has increased, encouraging farmers to adopt diversified, climate-resilient and income-enhancing farming systems.



[Source: Sanjoy Borthakur and Bhoirab Gogoi (KVK, Jorhat, Assam)]

96. Turning Local Flavours into a Sustainable Enterprise

Profile

Name : Techi Anita Toko
Age : 42 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 8259811319
Address : Village-Nirjuli, District-Papumpare, Arunachal Pradesh
Enterprise : Vegetable Pickles



Background

Mrs. Techi Anita Toko's entrepreneurial journey began during the COVID-19 lockdown, driven by her desire to convert her culinary skills into a home-based source of income. Before starting the enterprise, she had no formal training in food processing, packaging, or marketing and faced difficulties related to quality control, labelling, scaling up production, market access, and regulatory compliance, which constrained the transformation of her hobby into a sustainable business.

Catalyst of Change

The key catalyst for change was her participation in a vocational training programme on vegetable pickle making at KVK Papumpare, where she acquired practical knowledge on scientific production methods, hygiene, and standard practices. This was complemented by advisory support on packaging and labelling, which enabled her to meet FSSAI requirements and develop a market-ready brand. The KVK also facilitated linkages with raw material suppliers and guided her on enterprise registration and quality standards, helping her professionalize and scale her operations.

Pathway to Progress

Her pathways of progress included setting up a mini pickle production unit in her backyard to ensure hygienic and controlled processing, standardizing recipes for king chilli, chicken, and bamboo shoot pickles to maintain consistent quality, and formalizing her enterprise by obtaining FSSAI registration (FSSAI No. 20222001000677) along with Udyam Registration (AR-10-0001911), which enabled her to operate as a recognized and compliant food processing enterprise.



Highlights

- » Establishment of Cooperative Enterprise: Established M/S Sumchi Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd. in 2023 after receiving training from KVK Papumpare and completed FSSAI and Udyam registrations.
- » Production, Income, and Employment Generation: Produces about 500 bottles each of king chilli, chicken, and bamboo shoot pickles annually, earning Rs. 3.75 lakh and employing two person.
- » Recognition and Appreciation: Received appreciation from the Honorable Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh for product quality.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Achieved productivity and income enhancement through annual production of about 500 bottles each of king chilli, chicken, and bamboo shoot pickles (200 g per bottle).
- » Recorded a documented annual turnover of Rs. 3.75 lakh from value-added products.
- » Generated employment for two persons engaged in production and processing activities.
- » Sourced raw materials from local vegetable vendors, BSB Co., and other local suppliers, strengthening community linkages.
- » Contributed to local livelihood generation and rural economic development through enterprise-based value addition.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Through skill development and institutional support, she successfully transformed a small backyard activity into a formally registered enterprise, while also inspiring other local women to consider home-based food processing ventures. The vegetable pickles produced by M/S Sumchi Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd. received appreciation from the Honorable Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu, which significantly enhanced the enterprise's visibility and credibility. She now serves as a role model for women entrepreneurs in her community, demonstrating how training, confidence, and institutional handholding can lead to sustainable income generation and social empowerment.

Influence on other farmers

Her success has motivated local farmers and women to adopt value addition of indigenous produce and start small food processing enterprises. By showcasing the benefits of training, quality standards, and formal registration, she has encouraged others to follow scientific and market-oriented practices. Her local sourcing model has also strengthened community linkages and rural livelihoods.



[Source: Tadang Meena and Nane Taga (KVK, Papumpare, Arunachal Pradesh)]

97. Local Produce to Global Plates: The Rise of Women-Led Organic Processing Enterprise in Sikkim

Profile

Name : Prava Chettri
Age : 27 years
Education : Graduate
Mobile No : 9734159383
Address : North Sikkim (Mangan), Sikkim
Enterprise : Organic food processing, packaging, and branding



Background

Prava Chettri hailed from a remote Himalayan region where agricultural production was largely subsistence-oriented and farmers faced limited market access, absence of value addition, and poor price realization. Despite the availability of high-value organic crops such as quinoa, large cardamom, ginger, and turmeric, the lack of processing infrastructure, branding knowledge, and food safety compliance restricted commercialization. Prior to intervention, produce was mostly sold as raw material with minimal income returns.

Catalyst of Change

In 2020, Prava Chettri approached KVK North Sikkim (Mangan) with a strong aspiration to become an entrepreneur, and in response, the KVK provided comprehensive handholding support to nurture her enterprise. This included entrepreneurship development training in agri-horti processing and packaging, technical guidance for procuring processing machinery such as a quinoa destoner, quinoa processing unit, grinding machine, and solar dryer, along with capacity building on food safety standards, labeling, and branding. The KVK also facilitated FSSAI registration to ensure regulatory compliance and enabled her exposure to national and global buyer-seller meets, strengthening her market vision and business skills, while supporting market linkages through cooperative outlets and digital platforms, thereby laying a strong foundation for a sustainable agri-processing enterprise.



Highlights

- » Establishment of Agri-Processing Enterprise: Established a registered agri-processing enterprise (Sikkim Seasoning) in 2022 with valid FSSAI registration, converting organic hill produce into high-value products.
- » Turnover and Profit Achievement: Achieved a gross turnover of Rs. 14.14 lakh and a net annual profit of Rs. 4.90 lakh (2024–25) through scientific processing, packaging, and branding.
- » Employment Generation and Backward Linkages: Generated direct employment for 7 persons and strengthened backward linkages with farmers, SHGs, and FPOs in remote areas of North Sikkim.
- » Awards, Recognition, and Leadership: Received state and national recognition, including Best Product of the Year (Quinoa, 2022) and Best Stall Award, emerging as a role model for women-led agri-entrepreneurship.

income of Rs. 0.896 lakh.

- » Normal and premium organic gift boxes contributed a combined net income of Rs. 1.60 lakh.
- » Created direct employment for seven individuals in processing, packaging, and marketing activities.
- » Provided indirect livelihood support to farmers and SHGs supplying raw materials.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Prava Chettri has emerged as a leading woman entrepreneur and youth role model in Sikkim, with her impact extending beyond business growth to community empowerment and farmer integration. As an active member of SEED CELL (Sikkim Entrepreneurship and Economic Development), she consistently motivates women and youth to take up agri-processing as a viable enterprise. Her achievements have been widely recognized through the Best Product of the Year (Quinoa) Award, 2022 conferred by the Nirmala Foundation and presented by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Prem Singh Tamang, the Best Stall Award during the 50th Year of Statehood Celebration at KVK, and her participation in prestigious national exhibitions including World Food India (Delhi), North East Food Fest (Guwahati), and Astalakshmi Mahotsav (Delhi).

Influence on other farmers

Ms. Prava Chettri's success has inspired farmers in North Sikkim to shift from subsistence farming to market-oriented production. Her assured procurement of organic crops motivated farmers to increase area under quinoa, turmeric, ginger, and large cardamom. Farmers gained confidence in value addition after witnessing better prices through processing and branding. She demonstrated the importance of quality, grading, and food safety standards for higher income. Her backward linkages encouraged collective selling through SHGs and FPOs. Women farmers, in particular, were motivated to explore agri-entrepreneurship. Exposure visits and interactions with her enterprise improved farmers' market awareness. Overall, she emerged as a change agent promoting sustainable and profitable hill agriculture.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted a value-chain-based entrepreneurship model, converting locally available organic produce into processed, branded, and market-ready products. She diversified her product basket to include processed quinoa, turmeric powder, ginger powder, dried red cherry pepper, large cardamom, and organic gift boxes, targeting both health-conscious consumers and institutional buyers. Scientific processing, hygienic packaging, attractive branding, and strategic use of e-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Rural Haat, and Urban Mart enabled rapid scaling. Simultaneously, she established backward linkages by aggregating raw materials from FPOs, SHGs, and farmers of remote regions like Dzongu and Mangan, ensuring inclusive growth and better farm-gate prices.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Recorded a gross turnover of Rs. 14.14 lakh with a net profit of Rs. 4.906 Lakh during FY 2024–25 from her organic food processing enterprise.
- » Processed quinoa emerged as a major contributor with a net income of Rs. 1.65 lakh.
- » Turmeric powder processing generated a net

98. Traditional Farming to Integrated Prosperity: An Inspirational Journey of Resilient Livelihoods in North Eastern Hills of India

Profile

Name : Nyagam Riba
Age : 41 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 7630865209
Address : Village-Regi, District-Leparada,
Arunachal Pradesh
Enterprise : Integrated Farming System



Background

Before the intervention of KVK West Siang, Nyagam Riba practiced traditional mono-cropping along with low-input livestock rearing, which resulted in low productivity, inefficient resource utilization, and limited farm income. Seasonal vegetables were cultivated under open field conditions using local varieties, making production highly vulnerable to climatic risks. The piggery enterprise relied on indigenous breeds with poor growth rate and feed efficiency, while dairy farming, vermicomposting, and value-addition activities were completely absent. Farm and livestock waste remained largely unutilized, increasing cultivation costs and reducing sustainability. Consequently, her annual net income was limited to only Rs.70,640, posing challenges to livelihood security.

Catalyst of Change

She approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra, West Siang, where she was introduced to the concept of Integrated Farming System (IFS) as a climate-resilient and resource-efficient livelihood model. The KVK provided skill-oriented trainings, frontline demonstrations, and continuous technical guidance on scientific integration of crops, livestock, and allied enterprises. High-yielding varieties and high-value crops were introduced under protected cultivation, while livestock components were upgraded through convergence with government flagship schemes. Scientific recycling of farm and livestock waste through vermicomposting was promoted, ensuring nutrient cycling, cost reduction, and sustainability.



Highlights

- » Significant Income Enhancement: Net annual income increased from Rs.70,640 to Rs.1,97,460 (179.6% increase).
- » Risk Mitigation through Enterprise Diversification: Risk reduction: Diversified enterprises ensured stable income across seasons.
- » Efficient Resource Utilization: Waste from one enterprise effectively utilized as input for others, promoting circular bio-economy principles.
- » Employment generation: Created self-employment and engaged family labour.
- » Replicability and Demonstration Value: The IFS model now serves as a demonstration unit for neighbouring farmers.

Pathway to Progress

With continuous technical backstopping from KVK West Siang, Nyagam Riba transitioned from traditional farming to a scientifically designed Integrated Farming System on her 1.13 ha landholding. High-value vegetable crops such as king chilli and tomato were introduced under protected cultivation, increasing income from vegetables from Rs.26,080 to Rs.61,500 annually. Indigenous pigs were replaced with Yorkshire piglets under the NICRA-TDC programme, enhancing piggery income from Rs.44,560 to Rs.81,560. A dairy unit with three cows was established under the Atmanirbhar Pashupalan Yojana, generating an additional income of Rs.29,600 per year. Farm and livestock waste was efficiently recycled through a vermicomposting unit, contributing Rs.9,800 annually while reducing dependency on external inputs. Further diversification was achieved through the establishment of a bakery unit at Basar market, which began generating Rs.15,000 per month within two months of operation.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Adopted scientific integration, enterprise diversification, and efficient resource recycling practices.
- » Total annual net income increased from Rs. 70,640 (pre-intervention) to Rs.1,97,460 (post-intervention) within three years.
- » Achieved improved farm productivity and reduced production costs through the Integrated Farming System.
- » Ensured year-round income generation, strengthening livelihood resilience.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

The successful adoption of an Integrated Farming System has enhanced Mrs. Nyagam Riba's confidence, decision-making role, and social recognition within her family and community. She has emerged as a local role model, inspiring other women farmers to adopt diversified, sustainable, and income-oriented farming practices.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Nyagam Riba's Integrated Farming System has emerged as a local learning model, motivating nearby farmers—especially women—to adopt diversified, climate-resilient, and income-oriented farming systems.



[Source: K Suraj Singh and Manoj Kumar (KVK, Leparada, Arunachal Pradesh)]

99. Earthworms to Enterprise: Journey of a Green Agripreneur

Profile

Name : Kanika Talukdar
Age : 42 years
Education : H.S.S.L.C.
Mobile No : 87239 97073
Address : Village- Borjar, District-Nalbari, Assam
Enterprise : Vermicompost



Background

After the accidental death of her husband in 2008, Kanika was left alone to raise her six-month-old daughter under extreme financial and emotional distress. With no stable income source, she engaged in multiple on- and off-farm livelihood activities but earned only marginal, irregular amounts that were insufficient to sustain her family. Lack of credit access, mechanization, and structured market linkage further deepened her struggle for economic survival.

Kanika's life took a decisive turn when she connected with KVK, Nalbari and attended a training on Vermicompost Production Technology in 2014. With continuous mentoring from experts of KVK, she constructed low-cost vermicompost tanks using bamboo and locally available materials. KVK provided 1 kg of *Eisenia foetida* earthworms through an FLD intervention and ensured repeated field guidance. She later received convergence support from the District Agriculture Office, Nalbari for vermi beds and branding assistance from agri-preneurship experts, strengthening her production and marketing pipeline.

Pathway to Progress

She formalized her product under the brand name 'Jay Vermicompost', reinvested profits to expand her unit from bamboo tanks to 10 concrete vermicompost production beds, and entered state-level supply chains. In 2019, she strengthened her entrepreneurial skills through incubation training at "NEATe Hub, AAU-Incubation Centre", Jorhat, unlocking potential grant support. Later, she diversified into vermiwash biopesticide production, launching 'Jay Vermiwash' as a commercial organic crop protection solution.



Highlights

- » High Production and Income Generation: Achieved 100 tonnes annual production, earning Rs. 5.5 lakh per year, ensuring self-employment and livelihood security.
- » Market Expansion and Brand Establishment: Expanded her market across 10 districts in North-East India, establishing strong demand for her branded product.
- » Recognition as Licensed Woman Entrepreneur: Became the only licensed woman vermicompost supplier in Assam, driving local organic farming momentum. Catalyst of Change

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Adopted a scientific production model, ensuring consistent output and reduced drudgery.
- » Transformed irregular earnings into a stable annual income of Rs. 5.5 lakh.
- » Reinvested profits to enable enterprise expansion and scaling-up.
- » Strengthened branding and quality assurance, facilitating long-distance market linkages.
- » Generated permanent employment for two rural youth, extending livelihood benefits beyond her household.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Kanika evolved into a respected women agripreneur and organic farming advocate, mentoring fellow farmers and inspiring multiple SHGs to adopt

vermicompost production. Her unit became a regular exposure-visit site for farmers and KVKs. She gained public-speaking confidence and societal recognition, earning awards from Asom Sangrami Mancha and Rotary Club, Dispur reinforcing her identity as a community innovator and role model for rural women. In the year 2025 she got TCS Thematic Award from TATA.

Influence on other Farmers

Her success mobilized rural women, youth, and SHGs—including Mahima Haloi, Champa Rabha Barman, Rumi Talukar, Anjana Haloi, and several others—to start vermicompost units, accelerating organic input adoption in the region. Her enterprise now functions as a demonstration and inspiration hub for emerging women-led green enterprises in Assam.



[Source: Ambika Charan Sarma and Homeswar Mazumdar (KVK, Nalbari, Assam)]

100. Lockdown Loss to Livelihood Leader: An Incredible Journey of a Woman Farmer from Assam

Profile

Name	:	Usha Nath
Age	:	44 years
Education	:	11th standard
Mobile No	:	9613077550
Address	:	Village-Gosai Solmari, Rangia, District-Kamrup (Rural), Assam
Enterprise	:	Duckery



Background

During the COVID-19 lockdown, when livelihoods across sectors were disrupted, Usha struggled to meet her family's daily needs. With no stable income source and limited access to organized livestock support, technology, and markets, sustaining her household became a challenge. Seeking a viable livelihood option, she approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kamrup, Assam and expressed her interest in livestock and poultry farming as a means of income generation.

Catalyst of Change

After an initial survey of the region's socio-economic condition, climatic suitability, and resource-bearing capacity, KVK provided her with a unit of Kuttanad ducklings, a breed chosen for its dual-purpose potential, disease resistance, faster growth, and low maintenance requirement. She received 20 ducklings along with feed, medicines, and continuous technical guidance. Acting on KVK's advice, she constructed a low-cost duck house using locally available materials.

Pathway to Progress

Demonstrating strong entrepreneurial initiative, she later purchased 50 additional Kuttanad ducklings independently and expanded her stock. Ducks began egg laying at 4 months; she introduced egg incubation and hatching using 3 locally made incubators, enabling her to produce ducklings. Over time, she continued increasing her flock and started selling ducklings and duck meat, building her brand locally. Her enterprise was formally registered as "Usha Enterprise", strengthening her market identity. Today, she is widely known across the district for supplying quality duck meat and healthy ducklings with assured local market linkage.



Highlights

- » Scientific Duckery: She adopted dual-purpose Kuttanad ducks well suited to the agro-climatic conditions of Assam.
- » Entrepreneurial Innovation: She established in-house duckling production using low-cost, locally made incubators.
- » Annual Income: about Rs.4 lakh through the sale of ducklings and duck meat.
- » Women Empowerment: She transitioned from livelihood insecurity to confident ownership of a sustainable enterprise.
- » Community Impact: Her success acted as a catalyst for the development of a Model Duck Village in Kamrup.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » She started with 20 ducklings supported by feed, medicines, and technical guidance, built a low-cost duck house, later added 50 Kuttanad ducklings, and introduced egg incubation using three local incubators to produce ducklings after laying began at four months.
- » Recorded a high hatchability rate of 82%, indicating efficient breeding performance.
- » The breed gained popularity due to high egg production and strong consumer acceptance of duck meat.
- » Earned a total income of Rs. 4.00 lakh during 2024–25 from duck farming activities.
- » Generated about Rs. 2.40 lakh from sale of 6,000 ducklings.
- » Earned approximately Rs. 1.70 lakh from duck meat sales.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her journey also brought strong personal and social empowerment. She received recognition and awards from multiple organizations, including appreciation from Asom Krishak Parishad on 21.12.2021, the Mahiyasi Bota by Ratnam in association with Assam State Women Commission on 08.03.2022, recognition from Assam Agricultural University on 15th August 2022, appreciation during the Atmanirbhar Kisan Campaign by Brahmakumari at Guwahati, and the Best Poultry Farmer award at the Regional Livestock & Poultry Show (17–19 March 2023, Khanapara) organized by the Government of Assam. While her path had obstacles and learning curves, timely intervention and mentoring from KVK helped her overcome challenges effectively.

Influence on other Farmers

Inspired by her progress, neighboring villagers also showed interest in duck farming, leading KVK Kamrup to initiate development of Bordol village as a “Model Duck Village” for duckery expansion and technology dissemination.



[Source: Ilakshy Deka and D.N. Kalita (KVK, Kamrup-Rural, Assam)]

101.

Learner to Leader: The Inspiring Rise of a Woman Entrepreneur

Profile

Name : Joshnarani Mohapatra
Age : 30 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 9348201528
Address : Vill- Balanga, Dist- Puri, Odisha
Enterprise : Mushroom cultivation, value addition, and vegetable cultivation



Background

Mrs. Joshnarani Mohapatra, a dynamic and enterprising woman, serves as a member of Board of Directors (BoD) of CIWANI Women Farmers Producer Company Ltd. She is also the President of Maa Gangadevi Self Help Group (SHG) and Mahalaxmi Mahila Krushak Gosthi, Balanga.

Catalyst of Change

She maintains close collaboration with ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar, where she has completed several capacity-building programmes on mushroom cultivation, value addition, and vegetable cultivation. In addition to ICAR-CIWA, she has established strong linkages with line departments, KVK Puri, and banking institutions. With her extensive experience, she also works as a master trainer in value addition and snack-making, imparting skills to other women of her area.

Pathway to Progress

Under her leadership of Maa Gangadevi SHG initiated value addition activities with financial assistance of Rs. 80,000 from Odisha Gramya Bank. The group procured necessary machinery and started producing items such as spices, wadi, papad, sev, ganthia, pickles, etc. Further, in 2024, Mahalaxmi Mahila Krushak Gosthi availed a loan of Rs. 5 Lakh with subsidy from Bank of Baroda to



Highlights

- » Engaged in mushroom cultivation and value addition.
- » Active SHG member and Community Resource Person (CRP).
- » Supported formation of 30 SHGs and 50 women farmer groups.
- » Received ₹80,000 bank support to start enterprise.
- » Earns regular income and inspires other rural women.
- » A true example of “Learner to Leader” and women empowerment.

strengthen and expand their enterprise. Each member of the group now earns a minimum income of Rs. 4,500 per month. Apart from group-based activities, Smt. Joshnarani also operates her own value addition unit at home with the support of her family members. She runs a retail outlet in the main market of Balanga, where she sells her value-added products.

Mrs. Joshnarani earns income from multiple sources, including her role as a CRP, her individual enterprise, and group-based activities. Collectively, these contribute to an annual income of approximately Rs. 4.80 Lakh making her a role model for sustainable women-led entrepreneurship.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition:

She has emerged as an exemplary woman entrepreneur in value addition and snack production. Her dedication, motivation, and strong leadership qualities have inspired many women in her locality. Working as a Community Resource Person (CRP), Mrs. Joshnarani has a deep understanding of the socio-economic conditions of farmwomen. Leveraging this insight, she has successfully planned and implemented location-specific and need-based livelihood activities for women. Her consistent efforts and leadership have resulted in the formation of 36 SHGs and 50 Mahila Krushak Gosthis, significantly strengthening women’s collective entrepreneurship in the area.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Joshnarani Mohapatra has emerged as a successful role model in her village and surrounding areas. Her journey from a learner to a successful leader stand as an eye-opener and beacon of hope, demonstrating how targeted training, institutional support, and determination can transform the livelihoods of rural women.



[Source: Sabita Mishra, Bhikari Charan Behera and Arun Kumar Panda (ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar)]

102. Women-Led Transformation through Small-Scale Poultry Farming

Profile

Name	: Jhililata Das
Age	: 39 years
Education	: 10th standard
Mobile No	: 7064774609
Address	: Vill- Sagada, Dist-Puri, Odisha
Enterprise	: Small Scale Poultry Production



Background

Mrs. Jhililata Das hails from Sagada village of Nimapara block in Puri district, Odisha. Like many rural women, her family depended on limited livelihood options, making it challenging to meet household needs, children's education, and healthcare expenses. Access to scientific knowledge, technical skills, and income-generating opportunities was minimal, restricting her economic independence. Recognizing her potential, she was selected as a beneficiary under the ICAR-CIWA's project aimed at enhancing livelihoods through family poultry production.

Catalyst of Change

The major turning point in her journey was the training and motivational support provided by ICAR-CIWA Bhubaneswar. She actively participated in capacity-building programmes covering:

- » Scientific poultry management and bird handling
- » Low-cost poultry housing preparation
- » Homemade supplementary feed formulation
- » Vaccination and disease prevention
- » Record keeping and basic enterprise management

Exposure visits to the Poultry Demonstration Unit of ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar and the Central Poultry Development Organization (CPDO), Bhubaneswar, further enhanced her practical understanding and confidence in adopting improved poultry practices.



Highlights

- » Adopted low-cost, semi-intensive poultry production system
- » Achieved substantial income growth from 50 to 200 birds
- » Enhanced household income (Rs. 1.20 lakh annually), education, health, and family nutrition
- » Emerged as a role model inspiring rural women in poultry farming

Pathway to Progress

As part of the intervention, She was provided with 50 four-week-old Vanaraja dual-purpose chicks. She constructed a low-cost poultry shed using locally available materials such as bamboo and paddy straw. The birds were managed under a semi-scavenging system, with access to broken rice, rice bran, and kitchen waste as supplementary feed.

Within three months, male birds attained an average body weight of 1.5 kg and were sold at Rs. 300/kg live weight, generating an income of Rs.10,350/-. The female birds were retained for egg production, earning Rs. 29,310 in one year through egg sales at Rs. 10/-

per egg. Through scientific poultry management, she earned a total net income of approximately Rs. 39,564 per year. Encouraged by consistent income and technical confidence, she expanded her enterprise to keep 200 birds in dip litter system with proper housing and started rearing in them in semi-intensive system following scientific poultry management practices. Through poultry farming, she earns an annual income of approximately Rs.1.20 Lakh. The income supported her children's education, household needs, and medical expenses. Additionally, nearly the egg consumption of family increased from nil to 3 eggs per week per member contributing to family nutrition.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her journey from a learner to a confident poultry entrepreneur stands as an eye-opener and beacon of hope, demonstrating how targeted training, institutional support, and determination can transform the livelihoods of rural women through family poultry farming.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Jhililata Das has emerged as a successful role model in her village and surrounding areas. Her achievements have inspired other rural women to adopt family poultry farming as a sustainable livelihood option. She frequently shares her experiences, management practices, and economic benefits with fellow farmers, motivating them to take up poultry farming using scientific methods.



103. Natural Farming with Crop Diversification: A Success Story from Kandhamal District of Odisha

Profile

Name	: Bhaktilata Pradhan
Age	: 47 years
Education	: Primary education
Mobile No	: 9439120934
Address	: Vill- Mandakia, Dist- Kandhamal, Odisha
Activities	: Integrated cropping system, Bio-input resource production



Background

Mrs. Bhaktilata Pradhan practised chemical-free farming, but faced low yields, soil degradation of and income instability. Interested in Natural Farming through awareness programme of ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar she enrolled as an active member of the Women Farmers' Interest Group (WFIG)-'Raikia Organics'. She adopted *jeevamrut*, *ghanajeevamrut*, *handikhata*, botanical inputs, and crop diversification to restore soil health, reduce cultivation cost, and improve household nutrition and livelihoods.

Catalyst of Change

She is a smallholder farmer owning about two acres of land, traditionally practiced mono-cropping of paddy with a few seasonal vegetables using farmyard manure. Although Kandhamal is largely organic by default, limited awareness of natural farming principles, poor crop planning, and inefficient resource use resulted in low farm returns and constrained livelihood security. Institutional support through training on natural farming principles, hands-on preparation of bio-inputs (*Jeevamrut*, *Ghanajeevamrut*, *Beejamrut*, *Panchagavya*, *Neemastra*, *Agniastra*, and *Brahmastra*), demonstrations on mixed cropping, crop diversification, composting and vermicomposting, along with critical input support, significantly strengthened her confidence. This enabled her to experiment, innovate, and gradually transition towards a chemical-free, diversified, and resilient farming system.

Pathway to Progress

She has adopted a diversified and integrated cropping system across different land situations. In the lowland area, she cultivated paddy followed by potato, grown both as a sole crop and intercropped



Highlights

- » Shifted from mono-cropping to a diversified, integrated farming system
- » Achieved ~25% yield increase through crop diversification.
- » Annual income: Rs. 1,25,000/-
- » Significant reduction in cultivation costs through on-farm bio-input production.
- » Emerged as a local resource person

with mustard or Raikia bean. In the medium land, she practised mixed cropping involving tomato, pumpkin, cowpea, okra, leafy vegetables, and a maize + pulses combination. Her mango orchard was efficiently utilized through intercropping with brinjal, tomato, colocasia, leafy vegetables, and cowpea. Regular application of *Jeevamrut* and *Ghanajeevamrut* significantly improved soil health, while botanical formulations such as *Neemastra*, *Brahmastra*, and the traditional preparation *Handikhata* proved effective in managing pests. For moisture conservation, she adopted practices like paddy straw mulching, dry leaf mulching, and construction of trench bunds. Additionally, the integration of two indigenous cows

supported on-farm bio-input production and vermicomposting, strengthening the sustainability and self-reliance of her farming system.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Crop diversification led to a ~25% increase in yield and ~33% reduction in pest incidence compared to earlier monocropping practices. Mixed cropping on one acre generated a gross income of Rs. 64,225 per season, providing an additional Rs. 12,845 over mono-cropping. The cost of cultivation declined significantly due to on-farm bio-input preparation, with her annual farm income reaching approximately Rs. 1.25 Lakh.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a local resource person on natural farming. She actively mentors and trains 15 women farmers from her SHG. She is recognized as an early adopter and role model of natural farming in her village

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Pradhan's success has triggered a ripple effect in Raikia block of Kandhamal district, Odisha. Women farmers now actively seek her guidance on natural farming practices, crop planning, and bio-input preparation. Her leadership has encouraged collective production and marketing of "chemical-free vegetables", creating local market demand in Raikia and Phulbani weekly markets, with linkages through FPOs and local vendors.



104. Empowering Farm Women through Integrated Farming System

Profile

Name	:	Saruju Nayak
Age	:	41 years
Education	:	Intermediate
Mobile No	:	7605999575
Address	:	Vill. Jirabadi, Block-Bhanjanagar, Distt Ganjam-761121, Odisha
Activities	:	Crop-Dairy-Goatery-Poultry-Honey Bee-Millet



Background

Mrs. Saruju Nayak is a smallholder agriculture farmer residing in the cyclone-prone coastal belt of Ganjam district, Odisha. She owns and cultivates about 5 acres of land, primarily dependent on paddy and seasonal vegetable cultivation. Her farming system is largely rain-fed and climate-sensitive, making it highly vulnerable to frequent cyclones, heavy rainfall, waterlogging, and occasional drought incurs huge loss. Recognizing these challenges, Mrs. Saruju Nayak developed a keen interest in animal agriculture and allied enterprises as a risk-mitigation and livelihood-enhancement strategy. She perceived integrated enterprises such as dairy, goatery, poultry, horticulture, and honeybee keeping as complementary to her existing cropping system, offering opportunities for round-the-year income. This background set the foundation for adopting diversified, climate-resilient, and income-generating animal agriculture-based interventions.

Catalyst of Change

She was motivated for scientific methods followed in Integrated Farming System (IFS). Further, their focused approach on improved method of goat-poultry-dairy farming and fodder cultivation supported by ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar changed her mindset to be socio-economically empowered. The spouse was trained in improved goat farming, dairying, poultry farming, horticulture, vegetable cultivation by scientific staff of ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar in association with ATMA, FIAC, Dept. of Animal husbandry, Odisha and KVK, Bhanjanagar to learn scientific methods of animal agriculture. Today, she has emerged as a catalyst of change, proving that women-led integrated farming, empowered collectives, and science-based interventions can reshape rural livelihoods, nurture leadership, and pave the way for sustainable rural development.



Highlights

- » Diversified Farming: Crop-livestock-poultry system consisting of goats, dairy cows, and poultry birds, fodder cultivation, Paddy and vegetable cultivation, with vermicomposting and honey bee.
- » Market Linkages: Sells products through SHG and FPO
- » Women's Empowerment: Mentors other women farmers, leads SHG/FPO/community, and inspires women to become Atmanirbhar (self-reliant).
- » Income Growth: Income jumped from ₹3 lakhs to 6.0 lakhs per year.
- » Awards & Recognition: Best farmer Award by Chief minister and Governor, Govt. of Odisha.

Pathway to Progress

They gradually developed a women-centric Integrated Farming System (IFS) comprising 90 goats, 10 dairy cows, and 200 poultry birds, ensuring diversification of income sources and year-round livelihood opportunities. To support the livestock component, 3 acres of land were brought under fodder cultivation, while 5 acres continued under paddy cultivation, ensuring household food security. In addition, 2 acres were developed as a horticultural block with mango, jackfruit, and pineapple, and 0.5 acre was allocated for fishery and vermicomposting, promoting efficient resource recycling and ecological sustainability. These interventions enhanced women's access to quality inputs, modern technologies, and knowledge systems, reduced livelihood vulnerability, and substantially strengthened their decision-making power, leadership, and confidence in managing farm-based enterprises.

Productivity & Income Enhancement:

As a result of systematic integration of enterprises, scientific management practices, and market linkages, the annual farm income increased by nearly 2 times, rising from ₹3.0 lakh to ₹6.0 lakh per annum, significantly improving economic resilience and livelihood security. She has established strong linkages with about 250 farm women, through cluster approach women self-help groups and promoted different allied agricultural activities through IFS to enhance their socio-economic well-being.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has been awarded with the "Best Woman Farmer" award from ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar, acknowledging her contributions to agriculture and women's empowerment.

Influence on other Farmers

Many of the youth and farmers undertake training from KVK, Bhanjanagar and Kandhamal and other govt. institutes send their trainees to visit the IFS system developed by Smt. Nayak. She mentors other women farmers, leading SHG/FPO/community initiatives, and serves as a role model for women in her community.



[Source: Biswanath Sahoo, Arun Kumar Panda and Debendra Nath Sarangi. (ICAR-CIWA, Bhubaneswar)]

105. Household Skills to a Thriving Enterprise: The Inspiring Journey of a Rural Woman Food Processor

Profile

Name	: Tara Devi
Age	: 55 years
Education	: 5th standard
Mobile No	: 7734871023
Address	: Village-Rajgarh, District-Alwar, Rajasthan
Enterprise	: Fruit and Vegetable Processing (Pickles, Chutney, Murabba, Candy, Squash)



Background

She has belongs to a rural household with limited income opportunities. Traditional agriculture and lack of access to technology, markets, and entrepreneurship restricted income generation. Seasonal surplus of fruits and vegetables often resulted in post-harvest losses.

Catalyst of Change

Mrs. Tara Devi received skill-based training in fruit and vegetable processing during 2019-20 from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Navgaon, Alwar-I. The training covered scientific processing, preservation, packaging, and marketing, enabling her to establish her own processing unit. KVK also established the market linkages and other government organizations & departments *i.e.* RAJEEVIKA, NHM, Dept. of Agriculture & Horticulture, Alwar for exhibitions and establishment of processing unit.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted value addition techniques for lemon, aonla, mango, karela, garlic, green chilli, and mixed vegetables. Products (Pickles, Chutney, Murabba, Candy, Squash) are marketed under the label "Produced by Rural Women Entrepreneurs". She actively participates in exhibitions and fairs.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Annual processing capacity: 125 quintals
- » Gross annual income: Rs. 18.75 lakh
- » Net annual income: Rs. 9.75 lakh



Highlights

- » Benefit–Cost Ratio: 1: 2.08
- » Provides employment to 25–30 rural women.
- » Value addition of local fruits and vegetables reduces post-harvest losses.
- » Produces processed products like pickles, chutney, murabba, candy, and squash.
- » Annual processing capacity: about 125 quintals.
- » Net annual income: approximately ₹9.75 lakh.

- » Benefit–Cost Ratio: 1: 2.08
- » Employment generation and livelihood security for 25–30 rural women
- » Value addition of local fruits and vegetables significantly reduced wastage of the produce.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a role model for rural women and youth. She mentors other women and has received multiple awards at district, state, and national levels. She has been honoured at various levels for her outstanding work in fruit and vegetable processing:

- » 2020: Honoured by the District Collector, Alwar, for excellence in food processing
- » 2021: Awarded *Women Power Award* on

International Women’s Day by NABARD

- » 2022: Received a Certificate of Appreciation at the Women’s Equality Day Fair, Jaipur
- » 2023 & 2024: Appreciation for product exhibition at Jaipur Saras National Craft Fair
- » 2024: Honoured on International Women’s Day by NABARD and Sakhi Mahila Milk Producer Company for promoting entrepreneurship and self-reliance among rural women

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Tara Devi has become a role model for rural women in Alwar district. Her journey clearly demonstrates that education constraints are not barriers to success when determination, skill development, and institutional support come together. Through her enterprise, she has strengthened rural livelihoods, promoted women entrepreneurship, and contributed significantly to local economy.



[Source: S.C. Yadav, Poonam, Suman Khandelwal, H.R. Mali, Kamlesh Kumar Yadav and Devilal Kikraliya (KVK, Navgaon, Alwar 1, Rajasthan)]

106. Entrepreneurship Development through Organic Vegetable-based Enterprise

Profile

Name	: Leela Devi Ojha
Age	: 47 years
Education	: 12th standard
Mobile No	: 8890115562
Address	: Village-Chawandiya, District-Bhilwara, Rajasthan
Enterprise	: Organic Vegetable Production



Background

Mrs. Leela Devi had less access to education and training in vegetable production. She followed traditional practice for vegetable production. By this she faced many problems like lack of knowledge of improved seed, nursery growing, low productivity, lack of technical knowledge in marketing etc.

Catalyst of Change

At the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bhilwara, Smt. Leela Devi Ojha received training in various scientific techniques related to organic-based vegetable production, crop production, and animal husbandry. She got trained in the use of vermicompost and waste decomposers in vegetable production, thereby becoming proficient in organic farming. Under the technical supervision and guidance of scientists from the Krishi Vigyan Kendra Bhilwara, Smt. Ojha started cultivating organic vegetables and grains on 1.5 ha of agricultural land.

Pathway to Progress

By acquiring knowledge and skills in modern and beneficial organic farming techniques from the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bhilwara, Smt. Leela Devi started producing organic wheat, chickpeas, okra, peas, chilies, brinjal, tomatoes, onions, and other crops.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She is currently earning a profit of approximately Rs. 4.85 lakh per year. From Organic vegetable production she is earning a profit of Rs. 1.67 lakh; from grains (wheat & barley) Rs. 1.25 lakh;



Highlights

- » Adoption of scientific organic vegetable production.
- » Role model for diversified organic farming (vegetables, grains, vermicompost, waste decomposer).
- » Annual gross income of Rs. 4.83 lakh from organic enterprises.

incorporating the latest technologies in organic farming. Besides, she is invited as expert speaker and guest at farmers' fairs, farmers' meetings, and agricultural programs organized in the district.

Influence on other farmers

Mrs. Leela Devi Ojha is an inspiration to many other women farmers for her active participation in organic farming, agricultural innovation, and agricultural programmes and taking up agriculture as an enterprise. She is also a role model for sustainable development through organic farming.

vermicompost Rs. 1.06 lakh, and waste decomposer Rs. 85,000/-.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has been honored at the district level by ATMA and the Agriculture Department for



[Source: C.M. Yadav (KVK, Bhilwara, Rajasthan)]

107.

Challenge to Confidence: Empowering Rural Women through Food Processing and Value Addition

Profile

Name	: Jyoti Nakalak
Age	: 49 years
Education	: B.A.
Mobile No	: 8209849818
Address	: Hindoli, District-Bundi, Rajasthan
Enterprise	: Food processing and value addition of fruits and vegetables



Background

Before entering the agri-processing sector, Mrs. Jyoti Nakalak was operating a small saree shop in her locality. Over time, the income from this activity became insufficient to meet family needs. She had minimal exposure to agri-based enterprises, lacked technical knowledge related to food processing, and had little access to institutional support, credit facilities, and organized markets. Like many rural women, constraints related to resources, awareness, and entrepreneurship restricted her potential to establish a sustainable income-generating enterprise.

Catalyst of Change

In 2021, Mrs. Jyoti Nakalak came in contact with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bundi, which proved to be a major turning point in her journey. She received training under ARYA project on food processing and value addition. The KVK provided hands-on technical training, guided her in planning and setting up a processing unit, facilitated access to required machinery, assisted in obtaining a food license (FSSAI), availing bank loan also linked to various marketing channels. With this institutional backing, she mobilized other women from her village and formed a women's SHG named "Shri Ramdev Group", establishing a collective model for entrepreneurship.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted improved and hygienic food processing techniques. She makes pickles, jams, and candies using fresh produce and proper hygiene. Her focus on quality and packaging-built trust, and now she's locally recognized. Her consistent performance and innovation in value addition gained wider recognition, and her success story was broadcast at the national level through All India Radio



Highlights

- » Technical training and handholding support from KVK transformed traditional livelihood to profitable food processing enterprise.
- » Formation of a women Self-Help Group (SHG) enabled collective production, access to machinery, FSSAI licensing, credit linkage, and market connectivity, strengthening women's participation and leadership.
- » Annual production of about 15 quintals, generating a net income of ₹10.00 lakh per year ensuring sustainable livelihood.
- » Recognition through district and state-level awards and national media coverage enhanced her social

(Akashvani) and Doordarshan, enhancing the visibility of her enterprise.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

The enterprise achieved an annual production of approximately 15 quintals of processed products. With a gross income of Rs. 20.0 lakh and a gross cost of Rs. 10.0 lakh, the unit generated a net income of Rs. 10.0 lakh per year and recorded a Benefit-Cost (B:C) ratio of 2.0, clearly indicating strong economic viability. The enterprise ensured sustainable self-employment for Mrs. Jyoti and also created income opportunities for women associated with her group, improving their livelihood security, and economic stability.

Social and Personal Empowerment, Awards and Recognition

Economic independence strengthened Mrs. Jyoti Nakalak's role in household and enterprise-related decision-making and enhanced her social standing in the community. She emerged as a role model for rural

women interested in entrepreneurship and collective action. Her leadership through the women's group encouraged participation, cooperation, and confidence among members. In recognition of her outstanding contribution to value addition, she received several awards, including First Prize for Innovation at the district level by ATMA, Bundi (2022), a District-Level Award by NABARD on Women's Day (2022), and the Krishi Ratna Pratibha Samman (2023). These honors established her as a leading woman entrepreneur in the agri-food sector.

Influence on other Farmers

Inspired by her achievements and the training support provided by KVK, three women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in nearby areas have adopted food processing and value addition as income-generating activities. These groups are now earning Rs.2.0–3.0 lakh per year, contributing to women-led entrepreneurship, employment generation, and diversification of rural livelihoods. Her experience demonstrates how capacity building, institutional convergence, and access to markets can transform rural women into successful agri-entrepreneurs.



[Source: Mahesh Choudhary (KVK, Bundi, Rajasthan)]

108. Enhancing Income, Nutrition and Livelihood Security through Climate-Smart Agriculture

Profile

Name : Rukmani Devi
Age : 45 years
Education : 12th standard
Mobile No : 9166283924
Address : Village-Barlajsar, District- Churu
Enterprise : Integrated Farming System



Background

Mrs. Rukmani Devi was earlier dependent on conventional farming practices with limited crop diversity and seasonal income. Farming practices generated modest returns due to low productivity and minimal post-harvest processing or value addition. Women's involvement was primarily in manual farm labour, restricting their economic participation, while household nutrition and savings remained constrained by irregular income.

Catalyst of Change

Her life changed when she joined KVK Churu-I in 2022. KVK introduced her to climate-resilient crops, nutri-garden kits, and women-friendly farm tools. These interventions boosted productivity, nutrition, and reduced drudgery. She's now growing vegetables like brinjal and cauliflower, ensuring year-round nutrition.

Pathway to Progress

Under the guidance of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Churu-I, a solar-powered irrigation system was installed, which ensured timely irrigation, reduced dependence on conventional energy sources, and significantly lowered irrigation costs while promoting climate-resilient farming. The farm women adopted a range of innovative, climate-smart and resource-efficient practices to enhance productivity, income and sustainability. The adoption of women-friendly, drudgery-reducing tools significantly minimized labour intensity, time requirement, and cost of cultivation, thereby improving operational efficiency.



Highlights

- » Adoption of women-led climate-smart integrated farming system.
- » Introduction of climate-resilient crops, nutri-garden, and solar-powered irrigation
- » 20–38% increase in productivity with annual income of Rs. 3.5–4.0 lakh.
- » Enhanced nutrition, reduced drudgery, and strengthened community leadership as Udyam Sakhi.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Owing to the integrated package of scientific interventions the overall crop productivity recorded an increase of 20–38%, which translated into an additional annual income of Rs.40,000–Rs.60,000, along with a notable reduction in production costs and physical drudgery. Cumulatively, the average annual income generated from all farm and allied interventions is Rs 3.5 to 4 lakh per year indicating substantial improvement in livelihood security. Establishment of a nutrition garden ensured year-round availability of diverse vegetables, leading to improved household dietary diversity, food security, and nutritional intake. The integrated farming system further facilitated self-employment. In addition, the farm woman is actively

working as an Udyam Sakhi under RAJEEVIKA, providing entrepreneurship support, awareness, and handholding to Self-Help Group (SHG) members, thereby strengthening community-based livelihood initiatives.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her active engagement in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and community institutions has positively influenced fellow farmers, encouraging them to adopt innovations and participate in women-led initiatives, thereby strengthening social cohesion, economic empowerment, and collective action.

Influence on other Farmers

She has emerged as a role model for women farmers, actively mentoring peers and promoting the adoption of improved agricultural practices and diversified livelihood activities. She plays a key role in decision-making at both household and farm levels, earning recognition and respect within her family and the wider community.



109. Transforming Lives through Millet Enterprise: The Journey of a Woman Entrepreneur

Profile

Name	:	Pooja Sharma
Age	:	46 years
Education	:	12th standard
Mobile No	:	9992029845
Address	:	Village- Chandu, District-Gurugram, Haryana
Enterprise	:	Agri-processing (Value Addition in Millets)



Background

Mrs. Pooja Sharma was in search of ways to make her own earning and support her family to live a decent life in a city like Gurugram, where cost of living is quite high. She took initiative and brought village women together in Chandu, Gurugram, to start a self-help group. The group then approached KVK, Gurugram for guidance and got hands-on training in the preparation of soynut (IARI technology) during 2013 and started their enterprise with this single product.

Catalyst of Change

Her SHG got a support from the KVK, Gurugram and received all kind of technical support in value addition, and exposure visits to IARI facilities. They got FSSAI registration and literature on processing. NGO Access Development pitched in with bakery training and equipment. Now they've signed an MOU with HAFED for regular supply of goodies like cookies and ladoos.

Pathway to Progress

She formed a women SHG named "Kshitiz" and took training on "Preparation of soynut and value addition" from KVK, Gurugram and started the enterprise. In 2018, One NGO "Access Development" provided them one bakery oven, cooking range, packing machines etc. and provided them training on bakery after which she has started her company with a name of "Zingnzest". Later on, their products have got place in top hospitality chains and stores like Annamaya Food Court in Aerocity, Delhi, 24X7, Reliance and Lamarsh stores in Delhi and NCR areas has led to an income of Rs. 8-10 lakhs in the year 2019-2020.



Productivity & Income Enhancement

She earned a net profit of Rs. 15,000 in 2013 and increased this profit to Rs 50,000/- in 2014 by adding other healthy and nutritious products like dalia, multigrain flour, biscuits and various savoury snacks. In 2017, the group was further supported by this KVK by providing them food processing equipment and utensils under ARYA project which raised her profit to Rs. 2.0 lakhs in 2017. At present, she is preparing 70+ products from millets and selling with brand name “Millet Mom” and earning Rs. 42.0 lakhs annually. She has supplied more than 1.5 lakhs nutritious millet laddus to Anganwadi centers under Feeding India Mission.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She is the recipient of multiple awards, including the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Antyodaya Krishi Puruskar-2015, IARI Innovative Farmer Award-2016, Stree Shakti Puruskar-2023, IARI Fellow Farmer Award-2025, Nari Shakti Puruskar-2021. She has also selected for Climate Leadership Integration Program (CLIP). This program is being operated under Climate Adaptation, Resilience and Climate Finance in Rural India (CAFRI II) project, which is a part of bilateral cooperation between Indian and Germany Government.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Pooja Sharma is a successful agripreneur and first ‘Lakhpati Didi’ of Haryana. She has motivated more than 150 women to adopt value addition for income generation. She has also provided employment to 20-25 women in her enterprise.



[Source: Kavita Bisht (KVK, Gurugram, Haryana)]

110.

Crisis to Confidence: Building a Women-Led Spice Enterprise

Profile

Name : Priyanka Saini
Age : 35 years
Education : M.A.
Mobile No : 8650620001
Address : Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh
Enterprise : Agri-processing- spice processing, packaging and marketing



Background

Mrs. Priyanka Saini comes from a middle-class family with limited financial resources and no established business background. The post-COVID period brought significant economic stress due to job loss in the family and losses in a previous business venture. Household income became uncertain, and opportunities for formal employment were limited. Despite having motivation and basic skills, she initially faced challenges such as lack of capital, limited market access, regulatory complexities, and balancing household responsibilities with entrepreneurial aspirations.

Catalyst of Change

A major catalyst in Mrs. Priyanka's journey was her association with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, which provided training and handholding support in food processing, hygiene, packaging, and basic business management. The KVK guidance helped her understand statutory compliance requirements, quality standards, and branding essentials. Motivated to build a legitimate and scalable enterprise, she formally registered her brand 'RootZest', obtained GST registration and an FSSAI

Pathway to Progress

She is engaged in the processing, packaging, and marketing of food-grade spices under the registered brand 'RootZest'. The enterprise involves sourcing raw spices from reliable suppliers, cleaning and grading, grinding and blending, and hygienic packaging with proper labelling. Emphasis is placed on quality control, regulatory compliance, and transparency, which has helped build customer confidence.



Highlights

- » Established RootZest, a women-led spice brand in the post-COVID period
- » Formalization through GST and FSSAI licensing
- » Annual income: Rs. 3.6 lakh
- » Focus on quality, hygiene, and consumer trust rather than heavy promotion
- » Supported by KVK Sahalience, enabling her to transition from an informal activity to a compliant, professional food-processing enterprise.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The establishment of a formal, compliant spice enterprise significantly improved Mrs. Priyanka's livelihood security. The enterprise generates an annual gross income of approximately Rs. 12.0 lakh with a net income of about Rs. 3.6 lakh. The enterprise also contributes to employment generation for family members and other women, while improving access to safe, unadulterated spice products.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She journey represents a strong example of women-led entrepreneurship in agri-processing. Her success has positioned her as a role model for aspiring women entrepreneurs in Saharanpur (UP) and nearby areas.

She has been recognized by the District Magistrate, Saharanpur on 14th August 2025. Her story has been media coverage as a feature story '*Saharanpur woman builds spice business from home*'.

Influence on other Women

Her enterprise demonstrates that women can build compliant, scalable, and trustworthy agri-food businesses even after economic setbacks, inspiring other women to adopt formal entrepreneurship in food processing.



[Source: Manoj Singh and Kanya Singh (KVK, Saharanpur, U.P.)]

111.

Distress Sale to Sustainable Livelihoods: Women-Led Value Addition Model from Unnao

Profile

Name	:	Tarawati
Age	:	50 years
Education	:	8th standard
Mobile No	:	7388523241
Address	:	Unnao, Uttar Pradesh
Enterprise	:	Mango value addition, candle making, nutrition garden, livestock and allied farm enterprises



Background

Mrs. Tarawati was a simple housewife and farmwoman till 2008. Her family owned only 0.2 hectare of land, including a small mango orchard. Due to frequent windstorms during the mango season, nearly 20–25% of mango produce was damaged every year. The absence of organised markets forced distress sale of raw mangoes at Rs. 5–7 per kg and ripe mangoes at Rs. 7–9 per kg, resulting in an annual income of only Rs. 3,000–4,000 from the orchard. The family's overall income remained very low and irregular, making livelihood security a major challenge.

Catalyst of Change

In search of solutions, Smt. Tarawati approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Dhaura, Unnao, where she regularly participated in various training programmes. In 2009, she was selected under the DBT-sponsored project "Empowerment of Rural Women through Value Addition of Mango Fruit". KVK provided continuous capacity building, hands-on demonstrations, technical guidance, and access to processing, packaging and labelling facilities at nominal charges, enabling her to start value addition without heavy capital investment.

Pathway to Progress

She began preparing mango-based value-added products such as mango pickle, mango leather (*aam papad*), mango candy, mango slices and mango powder. She also adopted intercropping of turmeric in mango orchards, converting it into turmeric powder for additional income. To diversify income further, she started candle making, producing plain, fancy and scented candles, especially during festive seasons. In addition, she manages a 'nutrition garden' (*Poshan Vatika*) for year-round



Highlights

- » Shift from distress sale of mangoes to diversified value-added processing
- » Utilisation of a small mango orchard for processing and intercropping
- » Expansion into candle making, nutrition gardening and livestock
- » Continuous handholding by KVK Unnao
- » Emerged as a Master Trainer and role model for women entrepreneurs

vegetable production and maintains a small livestock unit, ensuring both nutritional security and regular cash flow. KVK-facilitated exhibitions, sale counters, and SHG-run outlets provided strong market linkages and visibility.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

Through value addition and enterprise diversification, Smt. Tarawati's livelihood transformed significantly.

- » Annual Gross Income: ~Rs.4.40 lakh
- » Annual Net Income: ~Rs. 2.06 lakh
- » Employment generation: Self and family employment

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has inspired other rural women to adopt food processing instead of distress sale of produce. At present, two women have established independent food processing units, and 25 women from her village are preparing mango-based products under her guidance. Five SHGs in Unnao district have adopted her as a role model for women-led entrepreneurship. Recognising her expertise, KVK Unnao has associated her as a 'Master Trainer', enabling wider dissemination of scientific food processing practices.

Influence on other Farmers

Her enterprise serves as a demonstration model of women-led value addition, motivating farm women to diversify livelihoods, adopt scientific practices, and improve household income sustainably. She has been nominated for Best Farm Women Award under Doordarshan Kisan – Krishi Reality Show; featured during visits of Hon'ble Ministers, ICAR and State officials at KVK Unnao; widely covered in local and regional media during exhibitions and programmes etc.



[Source: Archana Singh, A.K. Singh, Ratna Sahay, Dheeraj K. Tiwari, R.C. Maurya, Sunil Singh and Jay K. Yadav, (KVK, Unnao, U.P.)]

112.

Drone Didi of Sitapur: Model of Eco-Entrepreneurship and Precision Agriculture

Profile

Name	: Sunita Verma
Age	: 39 years
Education	: Graduate
Mobile No	: 7460079761
Address	: Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh
Enterprise	: Drone spraying services, eco-friendly products, SHG-based enterprises



Background

Mrs. Sunita Verma belongs to a financially weak rural family and is landless, cultivating 2.5 bigha of leased land for household sustenance. With two school-going children and limited livelihood options, the family faced economic insecurity. Social resistance, misinformation in the village, lack of infrastructure, and limited exposure to modern technologies further constrained her opportunities.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point in her journey came through continuous support from Krishi Vigyan Kendra-II, Sitapur. Under the Rural Women Technical Park, she received skill-based training in eco-friendly enterprises. In 2023, she was selected under the Government of India's Drone Didi Scheme and received professional drone pilot training at IFFCO CORDET, Phulpur. Continuous handholding, demonstrations, motivation, and institutional linkage provided by KVK enabled her to adopt technology-driven entrepreneurship.

Pathway to Progress

She diversified her livelihood through multiple enterprises. She produces eco-friendly products such as herbal gual, cow-dung diyas, dhoopbatti, candles, pots, and charcoal briquettes using agricultural residues. Alongside, she practices crop cultivation on leased land to support household income and food security. After completing certified training, she began offering drone spraying services to farmers, ensuring timely and precise application of plant protection chemicals. Her husband actively supports drone operations using an electric van, making the enterprise family-based and sustainable. She also motivates and mobilises SHG women for income-generating activities.



Highlights

- » Selected and trained under the Drone Didi Scheme
- » Certified drone pilot providing precision spraying services
- » Developed eco-friendly products from agricultural waste
- » Active mobiliser and mentor of women

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The adoption of diversified enterprises and drone services significantly improved her livelihood.

- » Annual Gross Income: Rs.3.50 lakh
- » Annual Net Income: Rs.2.00 lakh
- » Increase in income after intervention: Rs.1.50 lakh
- » Employment generation: Self-employment, family employment (husband), and indirect opportunities for SHG women

The enterprise reduced drudgery, promoted precision agriculture, and ensured stable income.

Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a symbol of women's leadership in agricultural technology. Popularly known as "Drone Didi", she actively mentors rural women, promotes eco-friendly practices, and popularises modern farm mechanisation. Her enhanced decision-making role, confidence, and social recognition reflect strong women-led entrepreneurship. She was honoured by the Hon'ble Governor on National Farmers' Day (23 December 2025) at Integral University for her outstanding contribution to agriculture and women empowerment.

Influence on other Farmers

Her success has inspired rural women and youth to adopt technology-based agri-services, waste-based enterprises, and SHG-led livelihoods, strengthening community-level entrepreneurship.



[Source: Daya Srivastava and Reema Devi (KVK, Sitapur-II, U.P.)]

113.

Seeds to Sustainability: Enhancing Livelihood Security in Meghalaya

Profile

Name : Methina Ch. Marak
Age : 38 years
Education : B.A.
Mobile No : 8413831811
Address : Village- Dagal Gopgre, Chokpot, Meghalaya
Enterprise : Vegetable Farming



Background

French bean was one of the major crops grown by the farmer; however, its cultivation was restricted to the rabi (winter) season. The traditionally grown varieties were photo-sensitive and short-day in nature, requiring specific day-length conditions for flowering. As a result, cultivation during other seasons was not feasible, leading to low cropping intensity and limited income generation. Additionally, poor access to quality seeds and lack of scientific crop management practices further constrained productivity.

Catalyst of Change

Recognizing the need for technological up-gradation, the farmer approached Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), South Garo Hills for technical support. After assessing the existing cultivation practices, KVK scientists intervened by creating awareness on photo-insensitive and high-yielding French bean varieties, namely *Arka Komal*, *Arka Arjun*, *Arka Sharath*, and *Arka Suvidha*, which are suitable for cultivation during both kharif (monsoon/autumn) and rabi (winter) seasons. Simultaneously, scientific cultivation practices for vegetable crops, including recommended spacing, nutrient management, irrigation scheduling, and harvesting techniques, were imparted to the farmer.

Pathway to Progress

She enhanced her vegetable cultivation skills through hands-on training and technical guidance under the ICAR-IIHR NEH Programme, with continuous field support and advisories from KVK scientists to optimize crop management. Under South Garo Hills conditions, the *Arka Komal* variety outperformed local varieties, producing 32.57 pods per plant, 13.03 cm pod length, 7.83 g pod weight, and a yield of 102 q/ha compared to 24.16 pods, 12.87 cm, 6.80 g, and 65.7 q/ha for the local variety.



Highlights

- » Adopted photo-insensitive, high-yielding French bean varieties (Arka Komal, Arka Arjun, Arka Sharath, Arka Suvidha), enabling cultivation in both kharif and rabi seasons and increasing cropping intensity.
- » The technology encouraged expansion of area under improved varieties and has strong potential for horizontal adoption, especially among women farmer.
- » Methina Ch. Marak's success showcases the benefits of scientific vegetable cultivation, improved profitability, and enhanced livelihood security in the region.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

- » Technology Adoption: Improved Arka Komal French bean variety introduced for cultivation
- » Increased Profitability: Net income of Rs. 2,84,000/ha with BCR 2.62, compared to Rs. 1,76,500/ha and BCR 2.16 for traditional varieties
- » Improved Productivity: Better pod yield, size, and quality observed
- » Wider Adoption: Encouraged neighboring farmers, especially women, to adopt the technology
- » Impact on Livelihoods: Enhanced income, livelihood security, and promotion of scientific vegetable cultivation practices in the region

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Encouraged by the performance of photo-insensitive French bean varieties, she has expanded interest in cultivating improved varieties and adopting scientific practices for other vegetables. The demonstrated technology shows strong potential for adoption by neighboring farmers, especially women, enhancing income and livelihood security. Under the ICAR-IIHR NEH Programme, she was selected for an on-farm demonstration of Arka Komal on 0.1 ha.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Methina Ch. Marak's adoption of high-yielding, photo-insensitive French bean varieties has inspired neighboring farmers to follow similar improved practices. Her success demonstrates the advantages of modern crop management, encouraging other growers to adopt scientific cultivation techniques, increase productivity, and diversify cropping patterns. The demonstration has particularly motivated women farmers to participate in vegetable cultivation, contributing to wider technology adoption and enhanced rural livelihoods.



[Source: Basu Langpoklakpam, Tanya R. Mark, Thongam Monika Devi and Athokpam Haribhushan, (KVK, South Garo Hills, Meghalaya)]

114. Fallow to Flourishing Agriculture through Rice-Based Crop Diversification

Profile

Name : Ph. Santibala Devi
Age : 44 years
Education : 8th standard
Mobile No : 9862575766
Address : Village-Phumlou, Imphal West, Manipur
Activities : Crop-based farming (Rice-based diversified cropping system : Rice-Potato/Field Pea/Rapeseed)



Background

Mrs. Ph. Santibala Devi, a woman farmer from Phumlou village, Imphal West, traditionally practiced rainfed mono-cropping of kharif rice. Due to limited awareness, technical knowledge, and confidence regarding rabi crops, her land remained fallow after harvest. Consequently, cropping intensity was restricted to 100%, with an average rice yield of 41.5 q ha⁻¹ and a net annual income of Rs. 81,500 per hectare, rendering the system economically marginal and less sustainable.

Catalyst of Change

A major turning point in her farming journey occurred during 2024-25 through scientific interventions by ICAR-KVK, Imphal West. Front Line Demonstrations, capacity-building programmes, and continuous technical guidance introduced her to crop diversification and improved practices, including short-duration high-yielding rice varieties, soil test-based nutrient management, and improved agronomic and pest management. With access to quality seed, she successfully utilized the rabi season by cultivating potato, field pea, and rapeseed after rice, shifting from mono-cropping to a diversified and more profitable farming system.

Pathway to Progress

The farmer adopted a range of improved technologies and best management practices to enhance productivity and resource use efficiency. These included the use of improved rice varieties with timely sowing, replacement of fallow land with rice-based crop diversification, and cultivation of potato, field pea (legume), and rapeseed during the rabi season. She also implemented integrated nutrient



Highlights

- » Adopted of high-yielding rice varieties, integrated nutrient and pest management, and introduction of rabi crops like potato, field pea, and rapeseed increased cropping intensity from 100% to 200%.
- » Rice yield improved from 41.5 q/ha to 50.5 q/ha, while the inclusion of remunerative rabi crops raised her net annual income from Rs. 81,500 to Rs. 5,60,860 per hectare, with an overall B:C ratio of 3.13.
- » Diversification enhanced soil fertility, resource-use efficiency, and farm sustainability, while also empowering her socially and economically.

productive, profitable, and sustainable.

and pest management practices, ensured efficient utilization of residual soil moisture and nutrients, and followed line sowing with balanced fertilization, collectively contributing to improved crop performance and sustainability of the farming system.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

- » Improved Productivity: Rice yield increased from 41.5 q/ha to 50.5 q/ha.
- » Introduction of Rabi Crops: Potato (25 t/ha), field pea (15.02 q/ha), and rapeseed (10.32 q/ha) cultivated post-rice season.
- » Enhanced Land Use: Cropping intensity doubled from 100% to 200%.
- » Increased Income: Net annual income rose from Rs. 81,500 to Rs. 5,60,860 per hectare.
- » Better Profitability: Benefit-Cost ratio improved from 2.16 to 3.13.
- » Overall Impact: Farming system became more

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

As a result of the interventions, she gained confidence in crop planning and judicious input use and became recognized as a progressive woman farmer in her village. She emerged as a local role model, sharing her experiences with neighbouring farmers and inspiring other women to adopt diversified rice-based cropping systems, while gaining enhanced respect and social recognition within her family and community.

Influence on Other Farmers

The success of Mrs. Santibala Devi has motivated several farmers in and around Phumlou village to adopt rice-based crop diversification. Her field has become a live demonstration unit, encouraging horizontal spread of technologies promoted by ICAR-KVK Imphal West.



[Source: Lydia Zimik and L. Kanta Singh (KVK, Imphal West, Manipur)]

115.

Strengthening Rural Livelihoods Through Value Addition: A Success Story from West Garo Hills

Profile

Name	: Baldilla T. Sangma
Age	: 50 years
Education	: 9th standard
Mobile No	: 8787703757
Address	: Village-Bolchugre, West Garo Hills, Meghalaya
Enterprise	: Ama Food Product



Background

Mrs. Baldilla T. Sangma began her entrepreneurial journey by preparing different types of pickles from locally available fruits and vegetables in her village, mainly for local consumption and small-scale marketing. Recognizing the potential for growth, she later approached KVK, West Garo Hills, where she underwent various training programmes on value addition, processing, preservation techniques, quality control, and marketing of locally available fruits and vegetables. These trainings enhanced her technical skills and business understanding, enabling her to diversify her product range, improve shelf-life, and adopt better packaging and branding practices. As a result, her enterprise gradually expanded from traditional pickle-making to a wide range of value-added food products, with improved market acceptance and profitability.

Catalyst of Change

KVK West Garo Hills strengthened her enterprise through training in value addition, processing, preservation, packaging, branding, food safety, and marketing, enhancing her technical and entrepreneurial skills. KVK also facilitated linkages with departments, financial institutions, and marketing agencies, enabling wider market access. Participation in exhibitions, fairs, exposure visits, and awareness programmes helped her showcase products, receive market feedback, and connect directly with consumers and buyers.

Pathway to Progress

She transformed locally available fruits into the value-added enterprise "Ama Food Product" through improved processing technologies and product diversification. She began with pickles in 2016 and gradually expanded into chips, candies, powders, fruit wines, and fresh juices. Her enterprise enhanced



Highlights

- » Engaged in fruit-based value-added food products.
 - » Received training in processing, packaging, and marketing.
 - » Expanded from traditional pickles to diversified food products.
 - » Improved income and local market reach.
- » Increased Production & Market Reach: Gross income rose to Rs.1.46 lakh; B:C ratio improved to 2.78
 - » Current Performance (2024–25): Gross return Rs.3,94,800; B:C ratio 3.26, reflecting strong financial viability
 - » Employment Generation: Created jobs for five rural youths

production capacity, strengthened market reach, created employment for rural youths, and emerged as a successful model of sustainable, women-led rural entrepreneurship.

Productivity and Income Enhancement

- » Initial Production & Income (2016): Gross income Rs.73,000; B:C ratio 1.46
- » Technological Upgrade (2021–22): Investment of Rs.80,000 in processing machinery; expanded product range (fruit wines, fresh juices)

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Her enterprise, “Ama Food Product,” has empowered rural women by providing them opportunities to engage in value-added food processing and collective marketing. It has created employment for rural youths, strengthened community participation, promoted knowledge-sharing on sustainable practices, and inspired other women farmers and entrepreneurs to start their own ventures, contributing to inclusive and resilient rural livelihoods.

Influence on Other Farmers

Mrs. Sangma envisions transforming *Ama Food Product* into a well-established and trusted rural brand by expanding production capacity and improving product quality through advanced processing and packaging technologies. In the coming years, she plans to diversify her product range with innovative, health-oriented and ready-to-eat products based on locally available fruits and crops. Additionally, she aspires to strengthen market linkages, adopt eco-friendly packaging, and create more employment opportunities for rural youth and women, thereby contributing to sustainable livelihoods and inclusive economic growth in the region.



116. Economic Prosperity through Natural Farming in Tripura

Profile

Name : Manika Debbarma
Age : 38 years
Education : 10th standard
Mobile No : 8837452513
Address : Village- Nakshirai ADC Village, Kalyanpur, Tripura
Activities : Natural Farming in Paddy, Pulses and Vegetables, Aitorma Farmer's Club



Background

Mrs. Manika Debbarma, a resident of Nakshirai ADC Village, Khowai District, Tripura, has been engaged in agriculture for 12 years. Facing water-stressed and climate-vulnerable conditions, she received training from KVK, Khowai; and, three years ago, transitioned from traditional to natural farming. This shift increased her income, ensured financial stability, improved family health through chemical-free food, and allowed reinvestment in her farm. She is now recognized as a community leader and role model, especially for women farmers, regularly sharing her expertise to inspire sustainable practices.

Catalyst of Change

She transitioned of her farm from traditional to natural farming after training from KVK Khowai. She grows paddy, brinjal, ridge gourd, bitter gourd, pointed gourd, maize, and ash gourd using natural inputs like Jeevamrit, Beejamrit, Vermicompost, and Neemastra. She manages pests with sticky and pheromone traps, practices mulching for soil health, and follows integrated farming with 4 pigs, 20 ducks, and 15 chickens. She leads a Farmers' Club with a Rs.10 lakh machinery grant and serves on KVK Khowai's Scientific Advisory Committee.

Pathway to Progress

She has adopted sustainable and climate-resilient practices on her 1.2 ha farm, including the use of self-prepared bio-stimulants (Jeevamrit, Beejamrit, Vermicompost, Neemastra), mulching for soil health and moisture retention, and eco-friendly pest management with sticky and pheromone traps. An integrated farming system with pigs, ducks, and chickens provides compost and diversified income. She also established a Farmers' Club, securing a Rs. 10 lakh machinery bank to support



Highlights

- » Transformed 1.2 ha farm from traditional to natural farming with KVK Khowai's guidance.
- » Grows diverse crops using bio-inputs, mulching, eco-friendly pest management, and integrated livestock farming.
- » Cropping intensity doubled; annual income increased from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 2,20,000.
- » Leads Aitorma Farmers' Club and a Custom Hiring Centre benefiting 500+ farm families.
- » Recognized with Best Farm Woman 2024 and Champion Women Farmer 2024 for sustainable agriculture leadership.

timely cultivation. Reduced chemical inputs, organic practices, and diversified farming enhance soil health, conserve water, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and build resilience against climate-related risks

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Cropping Intensity: Increased from 100% to 200%
- » Annual Income: Rose from Rs.30,000 to Rs.2,20,000
- » Cost of Cultivation: Reduced under natural farming for paddy, ridge gourd, and bitter gourd
- » Production: Comparable yields maintained with natural farming
- » Net Returns: Higher under natural farming (Rs.46,470–Rs.1,92,500/ha)
- » BCR: Improved with natural farming (1.06–2.2)

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Through her leadership and empowerment of local women farmers, Mrs. Manika Debbarma has promoted sustainable agriculture and strengthened community knowledge-sharing and resilience. She has been recognized for her efforts with the Best Farm Woman Award (KVK, Khowai, 2024) and the Champion Women Farmer Change Maker Award (Outlook Agritech Summit, 2024) for adopting climate-smart technologies.

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Debbarma now motivates small and marginal farmers in her village and nearby areas, promoting the adoption of natural farming. Her efforts are paving the way for a Farmer Producer Company and a strong market network for natural farming products.



117.

Local Taste, Global Vision: A Woman-Led Spice Enterprise

Profile

Name	: Shailaja Jagannath Raut
Age	: 39 years
Education	: 12th standard
Mobile No	: 7058607738
Address	: Village- Padali Khurd, Karveer, Kolhapur, Maharashtra
Enterprise	: Agri-food processing – Spices, Chutneys, Pickles, Traditional Snacks



Background

Mrs. Shailaja Raut belonged to a traditional farming family and was primarily engaged as a homemaker. Despite possessing excellent culinary skills inherited through generations, she faced several challenges such as limited income sources, lack of formal business exposure, restricted access to markets, and social constraints typical to rural women. Initially, her food preparation activities were confined to household consumption and occasional preparation for village functions. The absence of structured training, processing infrastructure, packaging facilities, and regulatory knowledge restricted her potential to convert her skills into a sustainable livelihood option.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point came when her *Kanda Lasun Masala Chutney* received overwhelming appreciation during local social events. Encouraged by community demand and strong family support, Mrs. Raut decided to convert her skill into an enterprise. She gradually received exposure and guidance through:

- » Technical guidance from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kaneri, Kolhapur
- » Participation in women entrepreneurship exhibitions and SHG-based programmes
- » Informal capacity building through Self-Help Group activities
- » Support from agri-extension personnel and food technologists
- » Awareness on FSSAI registration, MSME schemes, hygiene, and packaging standards

These institutional and technical interventions helped her plan a systematic transition from home-based processing to a registered agri-food enterprise.



Highlights

- » Established a women-led food processing unit producing 23 spice blends, 6 chutneys, 4 chilli powders, pickles, snacks, and festival foods
- » Employment generation for 10–15 rural women from local SHGs
- » Development of a strong regional brand recognized for authentic Kolhapuri taste
- » Adoption of hygienic processing, quality control, and eco-friendly packaging
- » Expansion to digital marketing and e-commerce platforms

festive gift packs, and launch of a website (www.tusharmasale.com) supported by social media promotion.

Pathway to Progress

Her entrepreneurial journey evolved in a phased manner:

- » Start-up Phase: Manual preparation, sun drying, and hand pounding of spices using household utensils.
- » Formalization Phase: Establishment of an 800 sq. ft. processing unit equipped with semi-automatic grinders, roasting units, mixers, weighing scales, and sealing machines.
- » Diversification Phase: Introduction of multiple spice blends, chutneys, pickles, and traditional snacks with batch-wise quality control.
- » Expansion Phase: Branding as *Tushar Masale*, participation in exhibitions, retail tie-ups,

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Annual Production: Increased from small household quantities to 3800 kg/year
- » Annual Turnover: Increased from subsistence income to Rs. 96 lakh (2024–25)
- » Net Profit: Enhanced to Rs. 62 lakh/year
- » Employment Generation: Regular income for 10–15 women
- » Cost Efficiency: Reduction in wastage and improved shelf life through better processing



Social / Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

- » Emerged as a confident decision-maker within family and enterprise
- » Recognized as a role model for rural women entrepreneurship
- » Actively mentoring SHGs such as Abhang Mahila Bachat Gat
- » Awarded Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj Achievement for Excellence Award
- » Recognized by KVK, Kaneri with Chaudhary Charan Singh Innovative Women Farmer Award-2025 and featured in Marathi newspapers and magazines



Influence on other Farmers

The success of *Tushar Masale* has inspired over 100 rural women across Kolhapur, Satara, and Sangli districts to adopt home-based food processing. Several SHGs have initiated value-added enterprises in papad, snacks, and masala production. The enterprise has enhanced awareness about preservative-free traditional foods and strengthened rural livelihood opportunities in villages like Padali, Uchgaon, Mudshingi, and Shiye.

[Source: Ravindra Singh, Sunil Kumar and Pratibha Thombare (KVK, Kolhapur-II, Maharashtra)]

118.

Successful Journey from Teacher to Food Processing Entrepreneur

Profile

Name	: Jyoti Subhash Save
Age	: 52 years
Education	: B. A.; B. Ed.
Mobile No	: 9890655102
Address	: At. Post. Malti Bag. Gholvad, Dahanu, District-Palghar, Maharashtra
Enterprise	: Food Processing, Agro – Tourism



Background

Mrs. Jyoti Subhash Save's journey is truly inspiring. From being a school teacher with no steady income to becoming a successful agri-entrepreneur, she's overcome numerous challenges. Jyoti, 52, from Bordi village, Palghar district, left her teaching job in 1990 to pursue farming. She faced hurdles like lack of awareness about sapota products, limited market access, and social pressure. But she persevered, and her story is now a testament to resilience and innovation in food processing and agro-tourism.

Catalyst of Change:

Her breakthrough came, when she connected with KVK Palghar. They trained her in sapota production and value addition, opening doors to new opportunities. Inspired by a book on sapota products by Smt. Sharda Patil, Jyoti started processing sapota, mango, and aonla. She prepared raw mango flakes, chikku chips, and other products using natural open sun drying. However, she struggled with maintaining quality. That's when KVK scientists stepped in, helping her address the issue and take her products to the next level.

Pathway to Progress

Her entrepreneurial spirit took off, once she started processing Chikku chips and powder, marketing them in Bordi, a popular tourist spot. As tourism grew, so did her business. She seized the opportunity to start Agro-Tourism, aiming to educate visitors about agriculture. In 2006, she set up "MALTİ BAUG", a 4-acre farm-turned-tourism-center. Today, students, visitors, and camps flock to her centre, where she shares her expertise and serves homemade delicacies, inspiring many. Her journey from teacher to agri-entrepreneur is truly remarkable.



Highlights

- » From teacher to entrepreneur: Left her teaching career to build a successful food processing and agro-tourism enterprise, turning passion for farming into a sustainable livelihood.
- » KVK-driven transformation: With training and guidance from KVK Palghar, started value addition in sapota, mango, and aonla, improving product quality and marketability.
- » Award-winning innovator: Recipient of multiple state-level awards including Agro-Tourism Gaurav, Maharashtra Udyogini, Innovative Farmer, and Mahila Sheti Udyogika awards.
- » Inspiration to others: Serves as a KVK Master Trainer and motivates farmers, women, and students through her agro-tourism centre and practical demonstrations.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She has produced 735 Kg of processed products and earned a gross profit of Rs. 467,500 per year, while netting Rs. 350,000 per year. She also earns a gross income of Rs. 10,00,000/- per year from the Agro-tourism centre, with a net profit of Rs. 7,50,000/- per year. She is now satisfied with their income and doesn't bother about the resigned teacher's job.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

1. Agro-Tourism Gaurav Purskar 2015" by Agro – Tourism organization Pune
2. Awarded as "Maharashtra Udyogini Purskar 2015" for outstanding contribution in field of Food processing by Sakal & Mitcon College Pune.
3. Awarded as" Innovative Young Farmer (Konkan Division) 2016" by Krishithon, Nashik
4. Awarded as "Mahila Sheti Udyogika Purskar 2018" by Somvanshi Sangh Dadar Mumbai.

5. KVK Palghar felicitated her as a Master trainer in value addition of sapota

Influence on other Farmers

Mrs. Jyoti Save has become a source of inspiration for farmers, women, and youth by demonstrating how agri-processing and agro-tourism can be developed into profitable enterprises. Through her agro-tourism centre and role as a KVK Master Trainer, she actively guides visitors, students, and farm women in value addition, encouraging many to start similar venture.



119.

Empowering Tribal Women through FPO Leadership in Gujarat

Profile

Name	: Rasilaben Yogeshbhai Diva
Age	: 37 years
Education	: M.A., B.Ed.
Mobile No	: 9925689822
Address	: Village-Vanarchond, District- Dang, Gujarat
Enterprise	: Women-led Farmer Producer Organisation (Agri-marketing, Input Supply & Collection Centre)



Background

The tribal farming community of Waghai taluka faced multiple challenges related to agricultural marketing and access to inputs. Farmers were heavily dependent on middlemen, who offered low prices, used unfair weighing practices, delayed payments, and deducted quantities from produce sold. Transportation to distant mandis such as Vyara further increased costs and reduced net income. Women farmers faced additional social constraints. There was also limited awareness and trust regarding Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) during the initial phase of their establishment.

Catalyst of Change

In 2021, Shri Atmanirbhar Adivasi Mahila Khedut Producer Company Limited was established with the objective of strengthening tribal women farmers through collective action. During village-level surveys conducted prior to registration, Smt. Rasilaben actively participated and showed strong interest in agriculture and community development. She became one of the early members of the FPO and later took on an active leadership role. The FPO received institutional support through equity grants, management grants, and licenses for seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and FSSAI. Support from development agencies and financial institutions, including Axis Bank Foundation, further strengthened market-led interventions such as the establishment of the Vanarchond Collection Centre in 2023.

Pathway to Progress

She has been actively associated with the FPO since 2021 and plays a key role in both procurement and sales operations. Her major contributions include:

- » Mobilising farmers and building trust in the FPO model
- » Preparing village-level demand lists and ensuring timely supply of agricultural inputs
- » Facilitating procurement of vegetables such as okra, cluster bean, and maize
- » Establishing and managing a collection centre at her own premises in Vanarchond village



Highlights

- » Women-led FPO leadership: mobilised 57 farmers, built trust in the FPO, and emerged as a role model for tribal women.
- » Better markets, better prices: Set up and manages Vanarchond Collection Centre, ensuring fair weighing, transparent pricing, and Rs. 20–30/kg higher returns with immediate payments.
- » Strong economic impact: Facilitates Rs. 3–4 lakh in sales and Rs. 10–15 lakh in procurement annually; helped drive FPO growth from Rs. 1.40 lakh to over

Through her efforts, the Vanarchond Collection Centre has become a reliable market platform where farmers receive accurate weighing, transparent pricing, and immediate payments. Farmers earn Rs.20–30 more per kilogram compared to sales through middlemen.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

- » Sales facilitated by Smt. Rasilaben: Rs.3–4 lakh annually
- » Procurement facilitated: Rs.10–15 lakh annually
- » Increase in farmers' income: Rs.20–30 per kg of produce
- » Immediate payment system, improving cash flow for farmers
- » Discounted agricultural inputs supplied through the FPO

The FPO has shown remarkable financial growth, with turnover increasing from Rs.1.40 lakh (2021–22) to over Rs. 1.0 crore (2025–26).

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She has emerged as a strong woman leader in her community. Her involvement has resulted in:

- » Enhanced decision-making role within the FPO and household
- » Improved social recognition and respect in the village
- » Strengthening leadership within a women-led tribal FPO

She has become a role model for other women farmers by demonstrating that women can successfully manage market operations and collective enterprises.



Influence on other Farmers

Initially, farmers were hesitant to join the FPO due to lack of trust. Through continuous motivation and transparent functioning, Mrs. Rasilaben successfully mobilised 57 farmers from her village as active members. Her efforts have encouraged wider participation and strengthened the collective bargaining power of the FPO.



[Source: J. H. Lalwani, G. B. Padsala and J.B. Dobariya (KVK, Dang, Gujarat)]

120. Entrepreneurship through Millet Processing Leading to Women Empowerment

Profile

Name	: Gangasagar Lahu Padghankar
Age	: 46 years
Education	: 10th standard
Mobile No	: 7775872219
Address	: Village-Khanepuri, District- Jalna, Maharashtra
Enterprise	: Millet processing



Background

Mrs. Gangasagar Lahu Padghankar's life took a tough turn. Born in a poor family in Khanepuri village, Jalna, she had limited education and got married early. With three kids and pressure from in-laws, she started working in agriculture to support her family. However, her lack of experience led to health issues, loans, and financial stress, affecting her family's well-being and her children's education.

Catalyst of Change

She entered in SHG on October 5, 2023; then, in the year 2014, her SHG joined with the 'Umed Abhiyan'. She took small and big loans from the group and bought a sewing machine. Her family contributed a little in it. She really wanted to do something. One day she came to Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kharpudi and got some ideas of enterprises. She developed interest in agriculture, with KVK guidance, she started farming, since then her annual income from farming has increased day by day.

Pathway to Progress

Her entrepreneurial journey took off in 2022, when she started selling Sorghum hurda flour under the KVK programme, making a profit of Rs. 7,000 in 5 days. She expanded her business, selling hurda flour, jowar, and other products online and offline in cities like Pune, Mumbai, and Thane. Her profit grew significantly, with Rs. 1.20 lakh from a BKC Bandra stall and Rs. 1.80 lakh from a Mumbai stall. She credits her success to Krishi Vigyan Kendra staff's support, her husband's backing, and her own hard work. Now, she grows jowar, prepares hurda, and sells it, and is expanding into multigrain flour and soybean products, earning over Rs. 3.0 lakh/year from dhapata flour sales.



Highlights

- » Turnaround story: Rose from financial hardship to a successful agri-entrepreneur with KVK support.
- » Income impact: Earned Rs. 7,000 in 5 days initially; later achieved profits of Rs. 1.20 lakh and Rs. 1.80 lakh through exhibitions; now earns over Rs. 3.0 lakh per year.
- » Women-led inspiration: Runs a jowar-based processing enterprise

Productivity & Income Enhancement

She earned a profit of Rs. 7,000 in just five days during her first stall organized by KVK, which clearly proved the market potential of her products. Through participation in various exhibitions and stalls, she achieved significant business success, including a profit of Rs. 1.20 lakh at the BKC Bandra stall with an investment of Rs. 35,000, and a profit of Rs. 1.80 lakh from the sale of Dhapata Peeth and Dhapata in Mumbai in February 2025. At present, she prepares more than 10 quintals of

instant Dhapata flour annually and earns over Rs. 3.0 lakh per year from her enterprise.



Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

She gained self-confidence, financial independence, and respect within her family and village, and now plays an active role in household decision-making while supporting her children's education through her improved income. She has been recognised by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) and is regularly invited to participate in exhibitions, stalls, and training programmes. She also serves as a Master Trainer in KVK programmes, where she shares her experience and skills with other women and SHG members.

Influence on other Farmers

She used to make aware her SHG women members to start small enterprises for income generation. Mrs. Gangasagar act as a Master Trainer in various trainings organized by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra from time to time and also motivates other women in the village to start business.



121.

Home Kitchen to Healthy Habits through Millet-Processing

Profile

Name	:	Sarikaben Laljibhai Valand
Age	:	43 years
Education	:	12th standard
Mobile No	:	9978118311
Address	:	Khandhali, Kheda, Gujarat
Enterprise	:	Agri-processing (Millet-based food products)



Background

Before venturing into her current enterprise, Mrs. Sarikaben faced the challenges typical of traditional rural livelihoods. Despite her education, her opportunities were limited by a lack of access to specialized markets and modern processing technology. Relying on traditional practices often led to low resource utilization and restricted income growth. Like many women in her region, she navigated social and gender-related constraints while seeking a way to contribute meaningfully to her family's economic stability.

Catalyst of Change

The turning point came, when she shifted her focus toward Agri-processing, specifically targeting the high-nutrition value of millets. Through the guidance Shobhanaben Haribhai Patel (Who was associated with KVK, Kheda) in agri-processing foods and necessary training in food processing and capacity building, she learned to transform raw grains into high-demand consumer goods. By leveraging local government schemes and SHG support, she gained the necessary skills to move from subsistence farming to value-added production.

Pathway to Progress

She adopted innovative food processing practices to create a diverse line of 'homemade' healthy snacks:

- » Value Addition & Branding: She developed a product line including Ragi Sukhadi, Ragi Laddu, Bajra Biscuits, Rice Papdi, and even specialty cakes.
- » Sustainable Practices: By using climate-resilient millets like Ragi and Pearl Millet, she promotes



Highlights

- » Transitioning from selling raw grains to processed products has significantly increased her annual income and provided her with self-employment.
- » Demonstrated that small-scale, home-based agri-processing can generate steady income and self-employment with local resources and training support.

the most to the profit (Rs. 28,000) followed by Ragi Laddu (Rs. 13,500) and Papadi (Rs. 12,000). The total income from sales was Rs. 1,37,000, with total costs amounting to Rs. 84,000.

Social/Personal Empowerment, Awards & Recognition

Mrs. Sarikaben's success has transformed her role within her family and the Khandhali community. She has become a role model for other women farmers, demonstrating that agri-processing can be a viable path to financial independence. Her leadership in the kitchen has translated into a decision-making role in her household and increased respect within her society.

Influence on other Farmers

- » Inspired rural women and small farmers in Khandhali to adopt millet processing and value addition, instead of selling raw produce at low prices.
- » Demonstrated that small-scale, home-based agri-processing can generate steady income and self-employment with local resources and training support. Encouraged SHG members and farm families to explore nutritious millet-based products for both nutritional security and market demand

- » sustainable consumption while ensuring food security.
- » Income Enhancement: Transitioning from selling raw grains to processed products has significantly increased her annual income and provided her with self-employment.

Productivity & Income Enhancement

The production and sale of Sukhadi, Papadi, and Ragi Laddu resulted in a total net profit of Rs. 53,500. A total of 300 kg of products were sold, with Sukhadi contributing



[Source: Sobhnaben H. Patel, Arvindbhai B. Parmar and P. K. Sharma (KVK, Kheda, Gujarat)]



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