

Title: Entrepreneurship Development through Mushroom spawn production in Sonamukhi, Bankura.

Category: Additional Income

Challenge: With temperatures rising, weather patterns changing and climate-related disasters becoming more frequent, food security has become a major challenge across the world, and especially in India. As key players in the country's agriculture sector and those in charge of ensuring adequate nutrition for families, rural women are at the centre of this challenge. A FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) report says that if women were given equal access to resources as men, agricultural yield could increase 2.5-4% in developing countries, enough to feed at least 100 million more undernourished people. With this challenges and perspective Bharadihi Maa Manasa Mahila Group Activity group were given one Mushroom Unit under 2020-21 RKVY scheme. As this group was mainly engaged in agricultural activities but due to natural calamities and inbuilt constraints income from the same could not support the livelihood of the family of the group member and were in need of a stable additional income.

Initiative: According to the World Bank, rural women comprise 43% of the agricultural labour force that produces processes and prepares much of the food available in the world. Empowering and investing in rural women is also pre-requisite to fulfilling the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals that aims to end poverty and hunger, protect the environment, improve health parameters and empower all women. About 80% of the field work in agriculture, from sowing to harvesting, post-harvest management and all the daily household chores are performed by the cluster members. The tasks are laborious and since the women are unaware of the latest technical know-how, her output and productivity are low. There is need to cut the drudgery of women farmers and make their effort worthwhile and economical.

To uplift the socio-economic status of this group members, a project on mushroom cultivation, with an outlay of Rs. 47500 having 75% subsidized over total project cost of Rs.95020, covering a period of one (1) year was initiated in 2020-21 under RKVY scheme of WBCADC, KVK, Sonamukhi, Bankura. The prime focus of the project was to mobilize women farmers to generate a stable additional income by providing technical assistance through capacity building training and motivate them to generate on-farm as well as off-farm income through mushroom unit. A total of 10 women members were in that group named '**Bharadihi Maa Manasa Mahila Group**'. This group were formed by B.D.O Office, Sonamukhi. All the 10 women members of this group were given training on scientific and low-cost method of mushroom production technology.

Key result/insight/interesting fact: Institutional training of 5 days duration was provided on latest technology of mushroom production. Along with mushroom production technology as the group was engaged in agricultural field work, training regarding agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry were also given to them. The group were also made aware of the departmental schemes and programmes in these sectors so that they are able to avail maximum benefits therefrom. Along with specialized training of spawn production, exposure visits were also organized to different institutions, progressive farmers and other farms.

Impact: Adoption of this technology and additional support of mushroom unit under RKVY scheme has increased their income. This group member now annually participates in different exhibition of agriculture department. Not only were participation, they have also grabbed numerous prestigious awards at district, state as well as national levels. According to the Group members ‘Prior to establishment of mushroom unit under RKVY scheme, their monthly net profit from agricultural activity was Rs. 3500/group member, which was very much irregular and uncertain. But after the establishment of the unit they have got additional support of monthly Rs.3000/member from mushroom unit’. Some of the group members are active women members of Panchayat, Block, District level key farmers etc., bringing many more of their sisters into the development fold.

Lesson learned: ‘When women thrive, all society benefits and succeeding generation are given a better start in life’ (Kofi Annan). Interaction with scientists and subject matter specialists during training, exposure visits has sensitized them to the benefits of diversified agricultural practices, especially in tiding lean periods in normal agricultural activities. And nothing can be better than Mushroom spawn production as an option of diversified agriculture. This resulted into motivating 100 numbers of women member to start a mushroom unit actively and running it till date with a handsome income. Economic empowerment through RKVY schemes for the group has ensured better life and status for these women and infused them with new found confidence and decision-making ability.

Supportive quotes and Images:



Mushroom Unit given to Activity Cluster.



Cluster members engaged in spawn production activity.

Additional Information:

Group leader: Rokhha Bauri,
Other Members- Pampa Bauri, Jharna Bauri, Sanaka
Bauri, Subala Bauri

Checklist

No.	Question to consider	Yes	No
1	Is the story interesting to the target audience of the project/activity report?	Yes	
2	Does the story explain what new insights the project brings? What is the main lesson learned from the story? Does the story describe a key insight on what works and what doesn't and something that future projects could build On	Yes	
3	Does the story describe the outcomes the project produced and people who are benefitting? What changes-in skills, knowledge, attitude, practice, or policy-has the project brought about and who is benefitting from these changes?	Yes	
4	Does the story make a compelling point that people will remember? Does the story show how the project makes a difference to improving livelihoods and lessening poverty	Yes	
5	Does the story provide an interesting fact that people will remember? For example, how yield increased, how many hectares of land could become more productive from this innovation or technology?	Yes	
6	Does the story explain what kind of impact this innovation or technology could have if scaled up?	Yes	
7	Does the story show which partner contributed and how?	Yes	
8	Does the story include quotes from stakeholders or beneficiaries?	Yes	
9	Have I provided links to other media (journal articles, website news, newsletter, blogs, annual reports or other Programme / projects) that also feature this story?		No
10	Have I provided the contact details of people who can provide more information?	Yes	