ODISHA
MILLETS MISSION

WFP
World Food Programme


# Millet Journey of Odisha Millet Mission

CASE STORIES FROM THE FIELD

# Contents

# OVERVIEW

Despite substantial improvement in health and well-being since independence, malnutrition remains a silent emergency in India. The vulnerability of agriculture to climate change further compounds the risk of malnutrition. Being a nutritious and climate-resilient crop, millets are an excellent solution for the current agricultural and nutritional crisis in the country. Odisha Millet Mission (OMM) is a flagship program of the Government of Odisha launched in 2017 with an objective to improve nutrition at the household level through the revival of millets in farms and on plates of tribal communities in Odisha. OMM became a game-changer in the State because of its comprehensive program design for millet promotion, among indigenous communities, women farmers, and small and marginal farmers. Over three years of operations, it has already shown substantial progress in improving the production and consumption of millets.

Odisha millet mission is a unique and successful model in taking millets to the millions making it important to document the learnings, best practices, field stories and experiences for other States to learn from the experience and design similar programmes. For this, IPE Global Limited in consultation with World Food Programme (WFP) developed case studies. A qualitative research design was used, and data collection was undertaken from stakeholders at the national, state, district and field level using tools such as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). Districts were sampled purposively and the most interesting stories from the community were selected for in-depth interviews to understand how OMM changed their lives.

The case studies given in this document will give a holistic understanding of how OMM has managed to make an impact on the millet value chain in Odisha leading to an increase in its demand and supply. It will discuss real life experiences around how successfully OMM strengthened millet production, value chain, distribution and consumption, keeping a gender-inclusive environment throughout the program cycle while also focussing on climate resilience. It will also give the reader a clear picture of the community's perspective around OMM and inspire people and communities to adopt similar practices.

THEMATIC AREA 1

# MILLET PRODUCTION

## How OMM changed **Badal Sahoo's** fortune

### Background

Badal Sahoo (29) joined SG Foundation in 2019 as a Community Resource Person under OMM. Due to a financial crisis in his family, he had to discontinue his education after completing his schooling. After working in an iron company for a few years, he returned to his native village, *Barakhandia*, and started a poultry farm. He also started to work on his dream of graduating from college. He however could not cover the cost of further education with poultry farming alone and joined as a CRP. As a part of his duty, he has been assigned 3 Gram Panchayats - *Khuntapada* (6 villages), Chauthia (5 villages) and *Gunduria* (3 villages). He mobilizes farmers and shares knowledge and best practices related to millet cultivation.

### Intervention Details

As per SG Foundation's guiding principles, all CRPs themselves have to undertake millet cultivation in at least 1 acre of land. Accordingly, in 2020, Badal along with his mother and son started millet cultivation in their 1 acre plot following SMI agronomy practices. They invested approximately Rs.17000/-[1] and produced 10.00 quintal of *mandia* in the first year. They sold 9.40 quintal @ Rs.32.95 at the Mandi and got Rs.30,973/- along with an incentive of Rs.2000/-.

[1] Ploughing: Rs.4200/-, Seeds: Free, Compost: Rs. 1500/-, Poultry manure: Own, Labour: Rs. 7000/-, Weeding: Rs. 1600/-, Harvesting: Rs.2000/- Bio inputs: No cost

As a result of cultivating *mandia* himself, he has learnt several agronomic practices, which he teaches other farmers as a CRP. He only uses bio-inputs for millet production and encourages other farmers to do the same. He uses his story to encourage others to start cultivating *mandia* at least in their fallow lands.

## Impact

In *Barakhandia* village, most farmers would usually give their land for share cropping and very few farmers would undertake paddy cultivation. Therefore, farmers had limited skills and confidence to undertake millet production. Barring a few SHGs members, no other farmer showed any interest to undertake millet cultivation. However, Badal's story and effort helped mobilize 25 farmers who started millet cultivation in 25 acres of land. As millet cultivation grew, so did the demand for bio-inputs. Badal and his mother started preparing bio inputs like *Handi Khata* and *Jeevamruta* for the entire village to use. Badal is very grateful to OMM for supporting him in this new venture, which mobilized the community to cultivate millets, increased his household income, and assisted him to complete his education.

## Enabling women's economic empowerment:

# Bio-input Unit

## in Jashipur

### Background

The Green Revolution in India helped India achieve food security however it also led to increases in use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides leading to poor quality of soil. Additionally, the last few decades have witnessed severe effects of climate change with rising temperatures and scanty rainfall. These two factors have severely impacted agriculture in India. Millets, which have traditionally occupied a significant place in the diets and crop systems in tribal areas of Odisha, can grow with very low water footprint (around 80% less compared to paddy, wheat and sugarcane). Further, millets being rich in fibrous organic matter, are slow to break down in soil similar to our digestive systems. This aids in maintaining soil structure and retaining water. There is a need for farmers to adopt farming practices that have least impact on the environment while continuing to produce a large enough quantity of crops to sustain their livelihood and the country's food demand.

### Intervention Details

After introduction of Odisha Millet Mission, farmers are mostly using bio-inputs like *Handi Khata*, *Jibamruta* and Nimamruta etc.as a part


like cow dung, cow urine, *Arakha* (Calotropis) leaves, *Karanja* (Indian beech) leaves, *Neem* leaves, jaggery, white ant sand and gram flour.

### Impact

The first batch of production was started in July 2020 and JFPCL started its marketing in the block in August 2020. The SHG managed to prepare and sell 2,904 liters of *Jibamruta*, 30 liters of *Handi Khata* and 20 liters of *Nimastra*, making a profit of Rs. 7148. Based on discussions with Agriculture officials, JFPCL estimated that there is a demand for 3000 liters *Jibamruta*, 1000 liters *Handi Khata* & 500 liters *Nimastra* in the block, and this will continue to increase in the future. Looking at this increasing demand for bio inputs, the SHG is ready to scale up its production. As JFPCL is taking the responsibility of marketing, SHG members are