



3rd DISTRICT LEVEL SYMPOSIUM ON SYSTEM OF RICE INTENSIFICATION (SRI)



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29th March, 2011 at Tribal Museum, Koraput Organised By : JAIVIK SRI SAMAJ, Koraput

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ଆୟୋଜକ - ଜୈବିକ ଶ୍ରୀ ସମାଜ, କୋରାପୁଟ



SIR DORABI TATA TRUST



Supported By : SDTT, Mumbai, GWS-ORC, Bhubaneswar & PRAGATI, KORAPUT

In Collaboration with : Samprati, RAD, AFRD, Search, BKS, YUBA, SIVA, Surakshya, Tribe, Odisha, JSVSS, NYS, GJS, Sahara, AUS & Prastut

Introduction:

Out of the total cultivable land in Koraput District (301,000 ha), the area under paddy cultivation is 113,000 ha (37.5%). People depend on agriculture for their livelihoods which is mostly rainfed.

Although the average annual rainfall is 1,445 mm, a majority of farmers raise just a single crop as there is no assured means of irrigation. Rice is the primary crop grown by farmers and also the staple food for the population.



69 % of the farming families are small and

marginal farmers with an average land holding of less than 1 ha per head. Now due to water scarcity and climatic aberrations, the inundation method of rice cultivation will obviously become unaffordable. Further, the profitability of rice-growing farmers has declined due to increasing prices of inputs with relatively stable and low prices for rice.

The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) offers a viable alternative which can reduce the water requirements in rice cultivation while at the same time increasing yields and reducing the need for input of seeds, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which can have beneficial environmental impacts.

Objectives:

Pragati-Koraput, a voluntary organization working for sustainable livelihoods and food security among the rural poor and vulnerable families, has pioneered the experiments with SRI in Koraput District starting in kharif 2006 with trials for 11 farmers in Koraput Block. Now the practice has spread to 3,800



farmers with an area coverage of 1,600 acres in 188 villages of the 14 blocks in Koraput District in association with local NGOs which have formed a network called "Jaivik SRI Samaj".

In this context, where a large number of farmers have adopted SRI in all the blocks of Koraput District, it is necessary that a platform should be created to bring together information on the adoption of SRI and also on the innovations made by farmers. This needs to be showcased and shared in larger forums. In this connection, Pragati and the Jaivik SRI Samaj have been organizing annual district-level symposiums since 2009 to create such a platform for interaction among stakeholders and sharing of experiences in a district-level forum on SRI, and preparing future strategies for further up-scaling and popularizing of the practice.



Moreover, there are numerous success stories regarding experiences and cross-learning among farmers that should be shared; also interaction among different stakeholders (academicians, line departments, PRIs), with creation of opportunities for liaising with line departments.

The Symposium:

The 3rd District-level Symposium on SRI was organised by Pragati-Koraput and Jaivik SRI Samaj on 29th March 2011, on the premises of the Tribal Museum in Koraput, amid the chanting of the JAI SRI slogan that symbolizes the fraternity of SRI-practicing farmers. Five hundred farmers from all across the district, NGO representatives involved in SRI promotion, line department officials, bankers and media representatives all came together for the event.



Inaugural Session:

The Symposium was formally inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Guest, Sri Ashok Pangti, President of the Zilla Parisad, by lighting the lamp in the presence of other Hon'ble Guests. The other Hon'ble Guests of the session included Bharat Chandra Nath, District Director of Agriculture; Sri Narayan Sethi, Additional Project Director, ATMA, Koraput; Mr. B.B. Panigrahi, Manager Lead Bank, Koraput; Sri Alekh Chandra Sahu, District Agriculture Officer, Koraput; and Mr. D. Narayan, a progressive farmer from Ganjam.

Mr. Prabhakar Adhikari, Secretary of Pragati, in his brief address on the objectives of the Symposium reported that Pragati has been organizing such events since 2009 to create opportunities for farmers of the district for sharing their experiences and for learning and interacting with researchers, Govt. officials, bankers and people's representatives, and it has greatly helped in spreading the message of SRI among the small and marginal farmers of the district.

The session started with a brief overview of the work of Pragati and the Jaivik SRI Samaj in popularizing and up-scaling SRI in Koraput district. Starting with 11 farmers in 2006, 3,800 farmers are now adopting SRI method in 188 villages of 14 blocks in the district, with 1,600 acres of land coming under SRI. Emphasis is put on organic practices and the formation of organic farmers clubs. Farmers have claimed to get enhanced yield, i.e., almost double and treble as compared to traditional method. Pragati has also been involved in on-farm research in SRI.

Bharat Chandra Nath, District Director of Agriculture, in his address appealed to the farmers to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides for sustainable soil fertility, and observed that SRI is a very relevant technology for controlling the use of chemical inputs and can address the upcoming water-scarcity situations. He also emphasized the need of further research on SRI and its documentation so the stakeholders will be informed of the learning and best practices.

The APD/ATMA also emphasized the need of organic farming and of integrating other activities like poultry farming and pisciculture for better livelihoods. Mr. B.B. Panigrahi, Manager Lead Bank, spoke on the necessity and objectives of Farmers' Clubs and on different loan schemes for farmers. Mr. D. Narayan spoke about nutritional aspects of organic SRI, sharing his experiences of participating in different forums. He also informed farmers that the 'intensification' method has been successfully applied in other crops like sugarcane, ragi and pulses.

Mr. Ashok Pangji, the Hon'ble Chief Guest, spoke on the adverse impacts of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and how it has affected health and environment. He also spoke on the emerging water crisis. In the context of Koraput, where farmers have small landholdings and there is scarcity of water, SRI would be a relevant technology to address the food security of people and to promote organic practices.

Release of Booklet:

A bilingual booklet entitled *Koraput re SRI Dhana* (SRI in Koraput) containing the principles of SRI, success stories, innovations and best practices of farmers from the different blocks of Koraput was released on the occasion by the Hon'ble Chief Guest.

2nd Session: Sharing of Experiences & Issues by farmers:

Almost 30 farmers from 14 blocks of the district presented their experiences and narrated how challenging it has been for them to adopt the new practice, both socially and from technological perspective. Most of the farmers reported that they have gotten enhanced yield, which they attributed to increase in number of tillers, to less incidence of pest and diseases, and also to use of organic manures like vermi-compost and pot manure. Some of the farmers presented that they have adopted SRI even after resistance and non-cooperation of family members, and said there have been misunderstandings even among couples. But now all are convinced that they can get better yield with less seeds, less water ,and organic practices.



Some farmers have also prepared markers on their own, and some farmers are now good motivators and trainers in their respective field areas.

Duryodhana Gouda of Dashmanthpur block claimed that there were as many as 70 tillers on plants in his field, and he harvested 26 quintals from 1 acre of land where he used to get only 11 to 12 quintals (6.6 tons/ha vs. 2.5 tons/ha). Most of the farmers expressed their concern over lack of irrigation facilities, irregular monsoon cycles, and inadequate availability of organic manures and weeders.

3rd Session:

Mr. Rajesh Prabhakar Patil, I.A.S. , District Collector, Koraput, participated as the Hon'ble Chief Guest in the 3rd session of the day. The other Hon'ble Guest in this session was Mr. Nabakishore Tad, Deputy Director, Horticulture.



In his address to the farmers, the Hon'ble Chief Guest emphasized that SRI can enhance food security of the small and marginal farmers by increasing yield and reducing the investment in seeds and with less water. He expressed pleasure to witness such a big gathering of SRI-practicing farmers and encouraged the farmers to adopt SRI on bigger scale and take up plantation activities under the National Horticulture Mission scheme, which will address their

livelihoods and enhance income. He revealed to the participants that the Govt is also taking initiatives for promotion of SRI and will be implementing measures to promote SRI on 30,000 acres in Koraput District in the coming kharif season. He also emphasized that



collaboration of farmers, civil society organizations and Govt. can help in the up-scaling of SRI in the District.

Award of SRI SAMMAN

In an initiative to encourage farmers and to recognize their initiatives and innovations, 35 farmers were felicitated with the SRI SAMMAN award. Nominations for the award were made by the partner organizations involved in promoting SRI in the 14 blocks of the District. The Awardees included:



- **Murja Sadhu** and **Gangadhar Gemel** from the action areas of Gangeswari Yubak Sangha in Pottangi;
- **Samara Jani** and **Satapati Burudi** from the Prastutee areas in Pottangi;
- **Sonu Khillo** and **Sahadeva Khillo** from the SEARCH area in Boipariguda; also **Kamala Lochan Majhi** and **Laxman Nayak**, Boipariguda, for 3 years of exemplary work;
- **Duryodhana Gouda** received the award for enhancing paddy yield by 3 times although it was his first trial, along with **Manguli Jani** of Dashmanthpur block from the AUS area;
- **Raghunath Badnaik** and **Ramdas Sisha** from the ODISA area in Lamtaput block received the award for being the first farmers to adopt SRI in their areas;
- **Bali Durua** and **Chaita Muria**, the tribal farmers of of Kotpad block;**Guru Khillo** and **Padan Mali**, Koraput block, were awarded from the Pragati action areas.
- **Pantulu Kulampeda**, from a remote village, Gollur, in Nandapur block, was given an award for adopting SRI.
- Although starting for the first time in Kharif 2010, **Dalana Kadraka** and **Sathi Melaka** from RAD area in Bandhugaon, have harvested almost double amount as compared to traditional.
- **Suresh Kulesika** and **Prahallad Kulesika** from JSVSS area in Narayanpatna received the awards for successfully adopting the principles of SRI as they were doing or the first time.



- **Trinath Pujari** and **Pratap Bisoi** from Surakshya areas in Kundura,
- **Besni Miniyaka** and **Golekha Miniyaka** from the SIVA areas, from Laxmipur block there were awards for continued adoption of SRI and disseminating the practice among other farmers;
- **Mukuna Jani** was awarded for motivating 20 other farmers to adopt SRI, along with **Damodar Nayak** of Semliguda block from SAMPRATAI action area.



- **Gopal Pujari** and **Samara Majhi** from Sahara area in Semliguda block were awarded for enhancing their yield by adopting SRI.
- **Raibari Gadba**, a tribal woman farmer, and **Gangadhar Sadangi** from YUBA area in Jeypore block received the awards.
- **Radhakanta Tripathy** and **Iswar Behera** from the TRIBE area in Borigumma and **Gangadhar Sadangi** and **Ghasiram Pujari** from AFRD action area in Borigumma were awarded for successfully following the SRI principles with organic practices although adopting SRI for the first time.

The Hon'ble Chief Guest, District Collector, Koraput, presented the certificates and awards to each of the farmers. The Symposium ended with a pledge to carry forward the initiatives and a vote of thanks to the Guests and all the participants.

PRAGATI-KORAPUT

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