

Women Empowerment through medicinal plants in Jharkhand

– A case study of Vanopaj FPC



VanopajFarmer Producer Company Limited (VFPC),Darur, Hazaribagh is completely run by women stakeholders. By joining SakhiMandals, women farmers used to take loans at low-interest rates to fulfil their livelihood or personal needs. The primary occupation of all the members of the SakhiMandal of village is agriculture, but the selling price for their produce was comparatively less, apart from that vendor used to manipulate weight of the produces which resulting again less payment. Paying more money for seeds & fertilizers for production and selling the produce at low rates is the biggest problem for the farmers. For this, VFPC was registered on 9th April 2019 (Registration No. U01100JH2019PIC012827) in the Daru block under the MahilaSashaktikaranPariyojana (MKSP) of the Jharkhand Livelihood Promotion Society (JSLPS), Rural Development Department, Govt. of Jharkhand. A total of 1456 women farmers are becoming empowered and improving their livelihood through produces from cultivation Medicinal and Aromatic Plantsas well as collection of NTFPs. Initially, 15 producer groups were formed which were later increased to 36 producer groups. Cultivation of cash crops like Lemongrass, Tulsi, Kalmegh etc. in medicinal and aromatic plats& collection of Harra, Behra, Saal Seed, Lac, BelPulbas NTFPs and value addition offhose are carried out by the FPC. The FPCalso has a collection centre at village level which procures Agriculture, NTFP, Livestock, Medicinal and Aromatic produces where farmers can sell their items in the village and fetch for a good pricein turn save their time of visiting market place.



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VFPC supplies inputs to its producer groups including quality seeds at lesser price. They also supply livestock like ducks and chickens, with its feed and medicine in 16 blocks of Hazaribagh and it ensures that all the blocks where Hardening Center is located get timely and healthy chickens so that the farmer gets better income. In addition, VFPC is also promoting lac cultivation in the block.

Jharkhand is a natural resource capital of India and 29.61% of the total geographical area is covered by forest, but till now the market of NTFPs and naturally grown Medicinal produces are not readily available and eventually collectors are forced to sell at lower price. For the betterment of farmers & collectors VFPC collects the produces from farmers at village level and after value addition, sells it in the market under the Palash brand, which fetches good prices. At present VFPC is able to market 16 value added NTFPs and cultivated medicinal & aromatic plants produces like Karanj oil, Kusum oil, Triphala, Moringa powder, Kalmegh leaves, Lemon Grass, Palmarosa, Tulsi and Citronella oil etc. which are being sold through Local Market, Palash App, Amazon, SarashMela, Palash Mart and CLF.



Lemongrass, Tulsi, Kalmegh are mainly cultivated in the entire block by the FPC and they do all the work from extracting its oil to reaching the market at its own level. Lemongrass is cultivated in abundance in the barren land in the block, due to which the farmer is getting a very good profit. Along with lemongrass oil, FPC also markets dried lemongrass and it's slip from the farmers, which increases the income of the farmer.

VFPC have developed natural gulal for the festival of colour "Holli". Spinach juice, Beetroot, Palash flower, and Rose flower are the major ingredients used in making these Organic Herbal Abir-Gulal. The rural women of Daru block are making this Gulal using the leaves and flowers only, where no chemical has been added, only sandalwood, talcum powder and a small amount of natural perfume is added. For green colour they use Palak, for pink rose leaves, for yellow Palash flowers and for red beetroot. It is being marketed through various Palash Marts run by JSLPS at different places in the district as well as in the state.



Border Crop	Harsingar		Basak		Sindwar		Giloy	
Anar	P1 (5x5) Tulsi, Lemongrass, Khas		P2(5x5) Alovera		P3(5x5) Haldi		P4(5x5) Adrak	Munga
Papita	P5(5x5) Lahsun, Ajwain, Mangaraila	1ft x 20ft	P6(5x5), BhuiAnwla, Saunf	1ft x 20ft	P7(5x5)Satawar	1ft x 20ft	8(5x5), Ashwagandha	Curry leaf
Mehendi	P9(5x5) Batch, Brahmi, Pudina		P10(5x5) Khapra Sag		P11(5x5) Kalmegh		Jalkund	Arhal
	P12(5x5) Stevia		P13(5x5) Talmakhana		P14(5x5) Beng Sag			Moringa

Aushadhya Vatika Layout

Drugs made from naturally occurring plants play a significant role in both conventional and modern medicine. In various parts of Jharkhand, there are about 32 tribal communities where Munda, Santhal, Oraon, Kharia, Gond, Kol, Kanwar, and Savar predominate. Such indigenous communities, which lack access to modern medical facilities, use more than 160 types of plants with medicinal significance for different therapy with their traditional wisdom. However, the knowledge is still insufficient and requires expansion across the World. Because of this, a concrete effort is required to preserve the wild germ-plasm of these important and rare medicinal plant species which will surely assist to reduce long-term human suffering.

Home herbal Gardens or 'AushadhyaVatika'(1 to 1.5 decimal in size) is a small effort of JSLPS to conserve, revive and promote rare endemic medicinal plants in Jharkhand,so that people can understand the importance of those plants not only through environmental point of view but also through medicinal point of view. It is introduced by the VFPCin the Hazaribagh district. Under AushadhyaVatikamore than 30 plants is beingmaintained with 400 farmers in the Daru Block of the district under the technical guidance of the VFPC.During Covid-19 the local people benefitted by using the medicinal plants of 'AushadhyaVatika'.Since then the demand for medicinal plants reached at high level & local people became more health conscious and aware of the uses of medicinal plants

Aushadhya nursery (50 decimal to 1-acre in size)is an initiative to grow healthy and disease-free plants in a protected and controlled environment with the proper monitoring system. This is for the availability of a large number of plants to support multiplying in a large number of home herbal gardens (AushadhyaVatika) in the blocks. This is also to ensure timely commercial plantation by the selected farmers. The objective of establishment of the nursery is to cut down the procurement and transportation cost of Medicinal and aromatic plants and for commercial cultivation of medicinal plants, where one nursery can serve 5000 farmers. VFPC have a medicinal plants nursery which serves 6-7 blocks in Hazaribagh district where 4-5 women are working regularly for sowing, planting and crafting of the medicinal plants which also improve their livelihood.



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