

Vegetables Intercropping makes a Better Livelihood for a Small Farmer

Berkheda Mafi is one of the WARM villages coming under Rasullah Gram-panchayat of Sagar Block in Sagar district. It is about 10 kms from district headquarters and 5 kms from MVSS head quarter. Majority of the people residing in the village are Harijans who belongs to Scheduled Caste community. The main source of income/ livelihood of the villagers is from farming and agricultural coolie labour. The literacy of the community is very low. People from this community always face problem for water scarcity for daily usages and for agriculture.



Mr.Panna Lal with a worker in the Agri-farm

Ms. Malathi Patel and her husband from this village are medium farmers having 8 acres of agriculture land; but their income from agriculture is not much and therefore they are not able to make much profit from the livelihood. One of the main reasons for this is that they were following chemical farming where the input cost of production was very high. When agriculture became non-profitable, they had to take loans from banks and money lender. Eventually their life sank in debt.

Community Level Reflection and Mobilisation: Meanwhile immediately after the launch of WARM programme in the village, an interface meeting of the Community Based Organizations was held in which the main agenda of discussion was how Sustainable Agriculture Practices can be promoted in the village. After the discussion in the CBO interface on SAP practice, Ms. Malathi Patel and her husband were very much inspired and decided to start vegetables cultivation as intercropping/mix cropping in their farm land.

Process of Change: As part of promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the area, one day training was given to village farmers who include Ms. Malathi Patel and her husband. After the training, they started cultivating vegetables such as cabbage, lady's finger, brinjal, bottle gourd and Onion, ginger etc and started to sell out them daily in the local market. The average selling cost of the multi vegetables is very good and they get a daily income of Rs.1500/-. They send 20

quintals of vegetables to market per day; that means they are able to send about 600 quintals of vegetables per month and earns an income of Rs.45000/- per month.

RESULTS: Some of the main changes brought about as part of the programme are the following:

1. Ms. Malathi Patel and her husband have started cultivating different vegetables as intercropping / mix cropping as a result of WARM programme.
2. They are able to fetch a monthly income of Rs.40000/- to Rs.45000/- per month in a season which lasts up to six months and in a year, they earn around 2.5 lakhs of rupees.
3. They have also started to keep good quality of seeds for next production.
4. Their intercropping method is very inspiring for other small and medium farmers.



Community Ownership and Sustainability: Her husband Mr. Panna Lal is now a member of Farmers Club of the village and has become a model farmer. His knowledge and experience in the field of organic agriculture is being used by other farmers. In the exchange visit programmes under WARM programme he is being called as a resource person. Now the group is also proud of him.
