

Diversified Farming - Bane to Boon for Sustainability and Prosperity in Tribal Region of Koraput District

KBK (Undivided Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi) districts in Odisha is synonymous with poverty. Because of strategic location coupled with socio-economic conditions, majority of population living with poor socio-economic status. Sh. Jagu Sissa, aged 35 years, is a tribal progressive farmer from Podagada, a remote tribal village in Semiliguda block of Koraput. He owns 12 ha of agricultural land out of which productive low lands are submerged with backwater of Kolab dam and he is left with low productive uplands. Till few years back, he was finding it difficult to provide daily square meals to his family on sustained basis. With the support and technical guidance of ICAR-IISWC, Research Centre, Sunabeda, Koraput, he planned diversified farming activities like agriculture, dairy, horticulture in an integrated manner and fish farming from his submerged land not only help him comes out of the clutches of poverty on sustained basis but also increases his purchasing power.

Interventions of ICAR-IISWC, Research Centre, Sunabeda

ICAR- IISWC, Research Centre, Sunabeda is located in Koraput district of Odisha. Furthering the government initiatives of rural development through Tribal Sub-plan (TSP), Podagada is one of the selected villages. An initiative like agriculture, dairy, horticulture in an integrated manner has been adopted by Sh.Jagu Sissa of the village Podagada. Before ICAR-IISWC, RC interventions, Sh.Jagu Sissa was cultivating crops (paddy, raggi, niger and some vegetables) in the *kharif* season only, and worked as a daily paid *mulia* in the nearby villages. From this, he was barely able to meet his family requirements. Further, out of 12 ha, 5 ha of his land was under permanent fallow. His annual income was about Rs. 1.17 lakhs from both cultivation and other works. Attending training programmes,



exposure visits and constant guidance and support from ICAR-IISWC, RC brings a change and leniency in him towards diversified agriculture. He had shifted from traditional to scientific, commercial and more remunerative agriculture by replacing local varieties with high yielding varieties, judiciously using manures and fertilizers, optimally utilizing water through sprinkler irrigation, adopting multiple cropping with dairy farming (10 nos. of Jersey cows), which enhanced his income and increased employment opportunity. Fish farming from backwater of Kolab dam provided him much needed financial support on daily basis and kept him engaged round the year. Also, 5 ha fallow land is brought under conservation horticulture. After ICAR-IISWC interventions Sh Jagu Sissa earned a gross return of around Rs.5.45 lakh by selling his produce in local market from the same area of land with diversified activities. He owned assets like pump set, sprinkler set by investing his income. Moreover, he is acting as a torch bearer in motivating other farmers to adopt the scientific and diversified farming activities in the remote tribal village.

(Source: ICAR- IISWC, RC, Sunabeda, Koraput, Odisha)