

Archana Patil, Climate Change Adaptation Leader from Devsinga village

Osmanabad District, Maharashtra



Archana Patil comes from Devsinga in drought-prone Marathwada where climate change has meant decreasing rainfall and soil degradation. Archana has worked as a post master for the last 10 years. She finds time in between official work and development initiatives in the village. She motivates other women community about government team, taking poor community to offices and departments. Hardworking, enterprising and committed, as a leader in the Krishi Mahila Mandal and Self-Help Group, she has motivated others to be active and keep learning.

Archana and her husband own 10 acres of land which 5 acres are irrigated. The two of them prepare bio pesticides (Dash parni) to use in own field. Through continuous inputs and care, the land has become fertile and productivity and quality have both improved.

Archana took one gunta land from her husband and introduced new crops using her own seeds, growing palak, mirchi, kothambir, etc. on an experimental basis. When the productivity increased in the second season, she started in one acre. Using her own seeds she cultivated tur, moong and vegetables.

"We should be courageous to do innovative work. Even if we don't have anything, we can make miracles," Archana says.

Apart from the farming business she also has 10 animals and started milk production and fodder cultivation. Poultry farming was also started with the help of a bank loan.

The Krishi Mahila Mandal was formed by the Women's Federation in Devsinga with SSP's encouragement. It started with 15 women members to address various issues in cultivation, labour and marketing on a collective basis. Each member contributed Rs. 50 per month towards savings. They use the savings to give small loans to members for purchasing seeds, preparation of land, buying motor and irrigation pipes, etc. SSP also contributed Rs. 25,000 as Community Resilience Fund (CRF) to women's groups to implement innovative practices in agriculture and livelihoods.

"Women should do farming. We need to cultivate to consume our own food. Who will make it for us?"

To facilitate the learning process, SSP took women leaders to KrishiVigyan Kendra, Tuljapur and Agriculture University, Parbani in 2013 and 2014. Women groups selected for the training on soil and water testing, land mulching, seed germination test, preparing amritjal, amrimitti, vermin compost, animal care and fodder management. They got the training on seed preparation, Amrit Jal, Amrit Mitti, Vermi compost, soil testing, bio pesticides, animal care and fodder management.

Like Archana, other women have taken land from their husbands to farm with the new practises that have learnt-organic inputs, soil testing, seed germination and vermin compost, for instance.

Due to her effort, the practice has been transferred to more than 15 villages. Archana taught new practices to 15 village communities and more than 2000 women are aware about the initiatives in



Devsinga. In 2014, 200 women members from Jalna district visited Devsinga village to see the best practices thru MSRLM programme.

Archana has participated in All India Radio discussions and been interviewed twice on Azola preparation and bio pesticides. She has published articles in Agrovan and Adhunik Kisan. She received the Krishi Gaurav Award from Agrovan in 2013 and recognition from Parbani Agricultural University in 2014.

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