

Report

**Exposure visit of farmers from FSN study villages to fields under “System of Millet Intensification” (SMI),
Village: Beheraguda, Block: Kundura, Dist: Koraput
Date: November 07, 2017**

Finger millet is a major cereal crop in Koraput district of Odisha; it is a staple food of the native tribal communities. However, the area under finger millet has been reducing over the years due to increased replacement by commercial and horticulture crops. Further the tribal communities predominantly cultivate local landraces of finger millet viz., *Telugu mandia*, *Dasara mandia*, *San mandia* and *Bada mandia* using traditional agronomic practices like broadcasting, poor/no nutrient management, use of poor quality seeds leading to low production and productivity.

Against this background, promotion of finger millet was identified as a major initiative under the Farming System for Nutrition (FSN) study under the research programme on “Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LANSA) in Boipariguda block of Koraput district to increase acreage and production as well as household consumption. This is being done through introduction of location specific high yielding variety of the crop, improved package of practices and safe seed storage. In order to strengthen these efforts, an exposure visit of 38 male farmers and from 9 villages in the FSN study area one female farmer who has also undergone training as Community Hunger Fighter was organized to demonstration fields under “**System of Millet Intensification (SMI)**” on 7 November 2017.

SMI is being promoted by MSSRF under the “Odisha Millet Mission” supported by the government of Odisha. The main objective of the exposure visit was for the millet cultivating farm men and women to understand the SMI technique, observe the standing crop and discuss with practicing farmers about the potential benefit.



Figure 1: Farmers from FSN study villages seeing the standing crop in the fields under SMI



Figure 2: Group of Farmers at the SMI demo field



Figure 3: Farmers visiting the Millet Processing Unit at Chhendia Jhilligaon

The group visited the field of Banu Santa of Beheraguda village in Kundura Block. His wife and daughter-in-law shared their experience of cultivation practices, expected yield etc. with the group. The visiting farmers were quite happy to see the demonstration field and nearly 20 farmers expressed willingness to adopt the technology in the Kharif season in 2018. Farmers also visited the millet processing unit in Chhendia Jhilligaon village established by MSSRF under an earlier project. They had an interaction with the villagers of Chhendia Jhilligaon about the management and maintenance of the unit.



Figure 4: Interaction with farmers at farm school, Nuaguda.



Figure 5: Farmers visiting the garden at the farm school, Nuaguda

The exposure visit also gave an opportunity to the farmers to visit the farm school in Nuaguda where they interacted with Raimati Ghiuria about benefits of having a farm school, preparation of organic fertilizer (Handi Khata).



Figure 6: Farmers visiting preparation of "Handi Khata" at farm school, Nuaguda

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