



Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP)

The changing farm structure with dominance of small landholders is one of the notable features that has been evolving with time and will continue in the upcoming days. Small land holders Scheduled Castes (SCs) farmers are one of the worst suffering group, who are at the bottom of the social ladder in India. With SC families having the lowest land ownership in India, these constraints often make them more dependent on wage labour. Entrenched social discrimination and existing socioeconomic realities add to the disadvantages faced by SCs in both farm based and non-farm based labour market. It is reported that about 71 percent of SC farm wage worker reported a loss of an average of 43 work days due to discrimination in hiring. In addition to this, traditional monoculture and disciplinary agricultural approach are unable to meet the exponential and varying food and nutrition demand.

Hence, to improve the livelihood of these smallholders on a sustainable basis and enabling them to participate in the development process in an equitable manner, the Ministry under the Scheduled Castes Development Bureau has implemented Schedules Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP), to ensure flow of both targeted financial and physical benefits to Scheduled Castes.

Role of ICAR-CRIJAF for upliftment of SC Farmers

ICAR-Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres, Kolkata, through its breakthrough technologies has always bridged the gap between farmers and sustainable production by creating linkages among Researchers, Farmers and Industries. With constant efforts for socioeconomic upliftment of SC Farmers, the Institute has implemented SCSP Programme with following objectives: -

- i. **To promote knowledge on modern agricultural techniques and make SC farmers self-sufficient with critical agricultural inputs**

In order to develop knowledge and skill of SC Farmers by identifying and addressing the technological grievances in the field of agriculture and allied field, ICAR-CRIAF has conducted various capacity building programmes like trainings and input distribution programmes in several states like West Bengal, Odisha, Assam and Uttar Pradesh.





Till date, 31 T rainings have been conducted and about 1752 SC beneficiaries are covered under the programme across these states and the farmers are regularly monitored. The beneficiaries are updated with the latest technologies and agricultural practices through regular crop Agro-advisory, issued by the Institute. As one size does not fit all, the farmers were apprised of proper farm budgeting with scale neutrality and wider applicability techniques for effective land utilization. In addition to this, proven technologies of ICAR-CRIJAF were disseminated to the farmers to address the persistent socioeconomic backwardness of SCs.





In order to augment SC Farmers yield, improve their efficiency & productivity and reduce drudgery, critical agriculture inputs like jute seeds, CRIJAF Sona, Fertilizers and herbicides, agricultural equipment like CRIJAF Nail Weeder, cycle weeder, sprayers, paddy seeds, vegetable seed kits and fruit plants were distributed among SC farmers as an effort to reduce substantial poverty. In addition to this, animal components like chicks, goats and other components like portable vermicompost units, mushroom spawns, ducks, pigs were also distributed to encourage remunerative Integrated Farming System models and provide nutritional security as part of crop disaster management.





It is noteworthy to mention here that in the on-going COVID 19 crisis, ICAR-CRIJAF came forward and stood with the farmers and facilitated distribution of 940 kg Jute seed as the lockdown period for COVID 19 coincided with the sowing period of jute. In spite of several constraints due to lockdown, jute seeds along with vegetable seed kits were transported to other states for distribution among SC Farmers. Supplementing this, herbicides, fruit plants and paddy seeds have also been distributed in other jute growing states.

These capacity building programmes has helped in creation of product asset and has enhanced income generation opportunities for many SC Farmers across various states, thereby uplifting their social dignity and livelihood.

ii. To demonstrate and replicate proven technologies in Jute and allied fibres based farming systems

A Sub Project on Technological Empowerment of SC Families on natural fibre production and value addition through model demonstration for enhancing quality of their livelihood under Scheduled Castes Sub Plan scheme has been initiated at ICAR-CRIJAF to empower SC population through replication of proven and successful technology models of jute and allied fibres.

The demonstration of Sustainable agricultural practice/models of jute and allied fibres like introduction of high value crops like vegetables, medicinal and aromatic plants, spices, oilseeds as components of the jute-based cropping system, use of microbial consortium CRIJAF Sona for reducing retting duration and improving fibre quality, production of quality certified seeds, installation of micro-irrigation system, use of inhouse developed CRIJAF Nail Weeder for weed management and reducing drudgery etc. would help the SC Farmers to carry out with responsive production through scientific management of scarce resources.





In addition to this, implementation of Integrated Farming Systems models in jute and allied fibres as resource management strategy and construction of in-situ retting tanks and washing tanks has been initiated as a part of the project to pave way for meeting with household demand of balanced food, improved recycling of nutrients and water, besides increasing the on-farm employment.

iii. To explore the possibility of value addition through jute and allied fibres based diversified product by creating rural micro-enterprise and mobilizing SC Women Self-help Groups

In order to increase export diversified and value-added jute and allied fibre products commodities like apparel, furnishings, fashion garments, travel accessories etc., SC Women Self Groups have been identified, through which will the SCs will get an opportunity for augmenting income and have regular employment. As part of skill upgradation of rural youths, trainings will be provided for value addition and marketing initiatives to enable and empower SC population.



Success Stories of SCSP



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