Turmeric as a cash crop

Radhika Masti, aged 42 years is a small farmer of Mahadeiput village in Koraput block. Her family consists of her husband Somanath Masti, 4 daughters and one son. One daughter is married off and two children are studying in school. The family depends on 2 acres of land for their livelihood. Out of this they grow paddy in 1 acre and the rest one acre is mostly used for mixed farming, mostly millets.

Interventions under the Value Chain of Turmeric:
Pragati, Koraput has started interventions for value chain of turmeric in Mahadeiput Panchayat in 2013. Seed support was given to 46 farmers in the village. Radhika Masti and the members of her SHG were motivated to grow turmeric using the improved package of practices (earlier they used to grow turmeric in the backyard for own use only and harvested in a cycle of 2 years). The groups had a learning experience in the first year, but they could not get expected yield as they did not properly follow the package of practices.

This year Radhika decided to grow turmeric in 10 decimals of land inter cropping with pigeon pea, brinjal and ground nut. Radhika has participated in the training on improved package of practices organised in 3 phases in the village level. Besides turmeric, Radhika has cultivated paddy in 1 acre and also vegetables like potato, beans, brinjal and ground nut in small patches. She has also grown ragi using intensification principles.
Package of Practices followed:
The packages of practices followed by Radhika Masti.

- Organic Seed Treatment: Seed treatment done in organic manner using Bijamrita.
- Raised bed planting and maintenance of spacing.
- Mulching: Mulching was done after planting and also after two intercultural operations.
- Intercultural operations: Intercultural operation was done twice and application of organic manures was done after each intercultural operation.
- Application of organic manures and pest management practices. Radhika has applied medicinal pot manure and farm yard manure.

Impact:
Field Day and crop cutting was organised in 25 sq. m. plot which recorded yield of 26 kg. Radhika has harvested 4.3 quintal of turmeric from her land. She will sell a part of the produce after primary processing and she will keep 2 quintals for planting for the next year. She hopes to get at least Rs 8000/ by selling her produce. Besides harvesting turmeric, Radhika has sold brinjal of Rs 6000, potato and beans of Rs 12,000 and also marigold of Rs 500. She has also harvested pigeon pea which will be used for consumption.

Pragati has provided a weighing scale support to the Framers club under the project. Thus the farmers are selling their produce by weighing instead of bulk sale. Besides, Radhika 99 farmers of Mahadeiput are adopting turmeric cultivation with improved package of practices. ¹

¹ Pragati, Koraput- Food and Nutrition Security project case study from Mahadeiput GP of Koraput Block areas