

Empowerment of Tribal Women Farmers through Giriraja Backyard Farming in H.D.Kote, Mysore District of Karnataka

Backyard poultry farming is being recognized as an important component of socio-economic improvement among the tribal people. Protein deficiency is a common phenomenon in the diets of tribal people as their diets are predominantly based on cereals which contain low protein. Thus, need of animal protein with high biological value can be met through eggs and meat. Backyard poultry farming not only meets the nutritional security of tribals but also generates self employment to women and provides supplementary income.

Tribals are well aware of taste of desi chicken and accept it widely and it is in much demand. From commercial point of view, however, problem of low weight gain and less egg production with high mortality in chicks are the major problems. In tribal belt of H.D.Kote taluk of Mysore district, backyard poultry is very popular and mostly undertaken by the farm women as an income generation activity for livelihood security. ICAR –National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning Regional Centre, Bangalore intervened with the ‘Giriraja’ dual purpose improved backyard poultry birds under TSP through Department of Poultry Science, Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fishery Science University, Bangalore. ‘Giriraja’, a synthetic coloured dual-purpose strain is bred to resemble local fowls. Sturdy and resistant, it can easily acclimatize itself to any region and weather. Giriraja yields high quality and quantity of meat. It can survive like any native stock, except for the routine Ranikhet, no other vaccination is required. In a word, Giriraja is a miracle fowl. It thrives well under redistricted feeding and limited management practices. Its faster growth habit and higher egg laying capacity than indigenous birds have made marked improvement in livelihood of the farming community. Thus, the Giriraja birds have been identified for intervention due to multiple color plumage which resembles the desi birds and fetches better price in terms of meat as well as egg in the market.



The landless tribal farmers, who are interested and have rearing knowledge, were chosen for Giriraja backyard poultry farming intervention in the adopted villages. The institute organized off and on Campus training and demonstration programmes on “Backyard Poultry

Rearing” for farm women. During 2014-15, more than 750 Giriraja birds (vaccinated against Ranikhet) have been distributed among around 150 beneficiaries of 10 villages under the programme. Mrs. Puttamma of Elachikatte hamlet developed backyard poultry with professional touch and is rearing around 50 birds flock. The parameter wise observations showed significantly better performance of Giriraja poultry bird over the local ones; in respect of average body weight of male at three months (2.5 kg), average body weight of female at three months (2.0 kg), average age at first laying (150-155 days), average egg production (180-220 per annum), weight of each egg (50-55 g) and the benefit: cost ratio (3.5).



Now, Mrs. Puttamma is a model farmer and she is guiding other women farmers of the neighbouring villages on backyard poultry production. She has successfully demonstrated backyard poultry as a component of farming system which could create agro-entrepreneurship leading to sustainable livelihood security to rural youths and farm women.

(Source: ICAR-National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning, Regional Centre, Bangalore-560024, Karnataka)