Rallis

# CASE STUDY 6

## Improving Livelihoods of Small and Marginal Farmers

Rallis India's project focused on improving livelihood of small and marginal farmers by increasing productivity via modern and improved farming techniques such as System of Rice Intensification (SRI). As a part of an integrated approach, it also ran an integrated watershed project while focusing on enhancing the lives of women and youth.

### GOAL# 2 IMPACTS

- Increase in yield
- Technical know-how
- Increased income

### VALUE LEVERS FOR THE COMPANY

- Brand enhancement
- Social licence to operate

### What did Rallis do?

- As a part of the initiative, modern and improved techniques of farming including, various Government schemes were shared by experts in the community
- Initially, Rallis introduced SRI technique for paddy cultivation in lands offered by farmers. Post-implementation, crop production increased by 25 per cent with labour and seed cost declining by 50 per cent as compared to the normal method
- In FY2016-17, more farmers adopted the SRI techniques for paddy from five different villages. Farmers were also encouraged to opt for a second crop of vegetables and pulses
- In tribal areas, kitchen gardens were developed in every household. A total of 190 households benefitted through kitchen garden projects.

### Key success factors: What worked?

- Actual demonstration done on the field through pilot projects
- Villagers were convinced through counselling, discussion and meetings that the success of the initiative depended on unified efforts and community support.

### Project impact

- Linkage with the agriculture departments helped create sustained support from Government schemes
- Increased soil productivity enabled farmers to cultivate a second crop
- A rise in crop production by 10-25 per cent was seen
- Labor costs and seed costs reduced by 50 per cent
- Due to the kitchen garden initiative, tribals could access nutritious food. During the monsoon season the percentage of illness was reduced by 50 per cent, thereby improving the overall health of families in the community.

### Challenges

- The major barrier faced during the project was in mobilising farmers and procuring land for the pilot projects
- SRI practices were not adopted at large scale due to lack of awareness on practices, non-availability of labour, reluctance to maintain proper spacing between plants and transplantation of short duration nursery

- Motivating tribals to opt for the kitchen garden initiative and underlining the health benefits of various vegetables consumed from the kitchen garden by the families was time intensive.

Tata Steel

# CASE STUDY 7

## Mission 2020 for Agriculture Development

Tata Steel has been working through the Tata Steel Rural Development Society (TSRDS), an NGO formed in 1979 to implement social development programmes for rural communities in and around Tata Steel's operational areas. One of their CSR programmes – the Mission 2020 for Agriculture Development–looks to address poverty and food security by tripling agricultural income of marginal farmers in areas of high poverty.

### GOAL# 2 IMPACTS

- Income
- Technical know-how

### VALUE LEVERS FOR THE COMPANY

- Social licence to operate

### What did Tata Steel do?

Rural poverty is most acute in the tribal belts of central India. TSRDS therefore, concentrated its agriculture programmes in those last mile areas.

In the eastern state of Odisha, the programme has been operational in Sukinda and Bamnipal areas of Jajpur district; and Harichandanpur, Ghasipura and Joda areas of Keonjhar district. The programme is run in partnership with the 'Collectives for Integrated Livelihood Initiatives' - an NGO formed by the Tata Trusts - that specialises in agriculture development. The programme aims to transform the agricultural incomes of 7,000 households in these areas by 2020, by adopting a variety of strategies:

- Harnessing available skills and resources of tribal farming communities and by enhancing their capacities via skills-based training
- Improving the productivity of land by enhanced irrigation facilities, wasteland development, and horticulture
- Introducing dryland farming techniques in partnership with the Hyderabad-based International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
- Developing wastelands and converting them into orchards and plantations
- Creating and developing community institutions among farmers (men and women) so that the gains from the programme are sustained. These collectives also enable backward and forward linkages and bargaining power.

## Project impact

- Irrigation: About 103 acres of land dependent on monsoon for agriculture has been converted into a three-crop land. This has been done through the establishment of irrigation arrangements, including community-managed lift irrigation systems. Besides, ponds have been created or renovated to benefit 344 farmer households. By 2020, the project will bring 3,000 acres under the triple crop system, thereby increasing income sustainability
- Plantations: About 60 acres of waste land have been brought under cashew, mango and lemon plantations in partnership with the National Horticulture Mission benefiting 195 farmers through 6,500 plants
- Backyard plantations benefitted 445 farmers through a coverage of more than 2,200 plants
- About 500 farmers have benefited from vegetable cultivation on 60 acres of land.

## Key success factors: What worked?

- Formation of new self-help groups (SHGs) and rejuvenation of dormant SHGs prior to the start of agriculture interventions was critical. Additionally, the strategy to promote agriculture through women self-help groups was a key contributor to the success of the initiative
- People in rural areas were ready to try and adopt new technologies in agriculture and actively participated in capacity building workshops
- Women members worked as a team for a common goal in every agricultural intervention run by Tata Steel.

## Challenges

- Lack of irrigation facilities has been the biggest challenge for farmers. Moreover, due to large swathes of land under forest, the creation of irrigation structure was difficult
- Convincing villagers to participate in the agricultural intervention took considerable time. Also, market linkages needed to be strengthened to channelise high yield.