

Odisha Millet Mission (OMM)

The OMM was set up in April 2017, and aims to improve productivity, promote household level consumption, set up decentralized Processing facilities, promoting Farmer Collectives and Marketing and inclusion of millets in Nutrition Programmes (SNP to begin with).

Detailed Activities: OMM was initiated in 2017 for promoting Millets (Ragi) as a staple crop of the farming system. This aim of OMM is to improve productivity, promote household level consumption, set up decentralized Processing facilities, promoting Farmer Collectives and Marketing and inclusion of millets in Nutrition Programmes (SNP to begin with). For this, promotion of Farmer Producer Organization (FPOs) for aggregation and better marketing is conceptualised and most importantly include millets in ICDS, MDM and PDS. The mission activities are implemented by FPOs with support of local NGOs. The key steps for Millet procurement include:

- Procurement of Ragi at Minimum Support Price (MSP) conforming to Fair Average Quality (FAQ) norms
- Making subsidized Ragi available for inclusion in the PDS, ICDS and MDM schemes, closing the production cycle and multiplying benefits of Ragi production for the region
- Exploring markets for distribution of surplus Millets beyond PDS, ICDS and MDM schemes.

The Mission was started with 30 Blocks (7 Districts) in 2017 but due to positive response and demand from the farmers it was expanded to 55 Blocks (11 Districts) in 2018 to 72 Blocks (14 Districts) in 2019 by the Government of Odisha. Another 4 Blocks were added in the June 2020. The program shall be implemented in each selected Blocks for 5 years, and these Blocks are currently at varying stages of implementation.

Various guidelines on Ragi procurement from local farmers at MSP, farmer registration, District wise storage godowns, route Map from possible procurement locations to Storage godowns and Millet Procurement Automation System were developed to streamline this initiative.

Impacts and Outcomes:

- Increase in number of Farmers growing Millets from 7,014 in 2016-17 to 8,596 in 2017-18
- Increase in area under Millets cultivation from 2949 hectares to 5182 hectares (almost double) & increase in yield by 120% between 2016-17 to 2017-18
- 215% increase in gross value of produce per farmer household from Rs. 3957 to Rs. 12486
- 26495 Farmers registered, almost 95% of Ragi procured from farmers in 2019-20
- Procurement infrastructure set up in 14 Districts: this assured market supports bolsters Ragi production programmes in the area.
- Procurement made subsidized Ragi available which led to inclusion on Ragi in ICDS, MDM and PDS schemes, closing the production and economic cycle

Inclusion in PDS

In 14 Districts procuring Ragi, 1kg of rice has been substituted by Ragi owing to its higher nutritional value. It was distributed at the rate of Rs. 1 per kg under PDS scheme in 6 Districts to 16,01,206 ration card holders under NFSA.

Inclusion in ICDS

Ragi laddoo mix, made from ragi procured from farmers under the mission, was piloted in the Anganwadi menu in Keonjhar District on July 2nd, 2020, and the same has been requisitioned for Sundergarh District. Keonjhar District is also set to pilot ragi biscuits in the MDM/ICDS utilizing 401.4 quintals of surplus ragi.

Challenges:

- The farmers faced registration issues on the Millet Procurement Automated System (M-PAS) due to lack of familiarity with the process.
- The long distances to limited mandi points in each block, di-incentivized farmers from transporting their produce for procurement.
- Limited decentralized infrastructure for procurement and processing persisted in some areas.