

Bindu Devi: An Inspiring Journey from Labourer to Successful Farmer

Background

Bindu Devi (38) and her husband Mohan Paswan (45) are residents of Semarahiya Paswan Tola in Baikunthwa Panchayat, Nautan Block, West Champaran District, Bihar. Their life was filled with struggles as the family lived in extremely modest economic conditions. Their only source of income was agricultural labour, which barely sufficed to support the family and educate their children.



The couple has four children—two sons and two daughters. While one daughter is married, the other three children are still studying. With limited income and increasing expenses, the family constantly grappled with financial hardships.

In 2023, a transformative change occurred in their lives when the Samagra Shikshan Evam Vikas Sansthan (SSEVS) organized a meeting in their village. This meeting, conducted under the NABARD project, aimed to promote multilayered vegetable farming and introduce modern agricultural techniques. Attending the session, Bindu Devi not only listened attentively but also for the first time envisioned a way to change her family's circumstances.

As a landless labourer, she had no land to farm, but the guidance and encouragement from SSEVS inspired her to pursue what seemed an unattainable goal. Thus began Bindu Devi's inspiring journey from a labourer to a successful farmer.

Initiative and Efforts

In 2024, SSEVS held a meeting in the village under the NABARD project to promote vegetable farming. The session emphasized the benefits of multilayered vegetable farming and modern agricultural practices. Bindu Devi, driven by her family's financial difficulties and a desire for a better future for her children, decided to take a leap of faith into farming.

Challenges and SSEVS Support

Despite her determination, the biggest hurdle for Bindu Devi was her lack of land. With SSEVS's guidance and encouragement, she leased six kathas (approximately 0.2 acres) of land

from a local landowner. SSEVS provided her with training and guidance for vegetable farming, which included:

- **Seed selection and sowing techniques.**
- **Water and fertilizer management.**
- **Three-tier farming techniques.**

Moreover, under the NABARD project, SSEVS provided her with free seeds, reducing her initial expenses significantly.

The Beginning and Success of the First Harvest

Out of the six kathas of leased land, Bindu Devi began by cultivating radishes on three kathas under SSEVS's guidance. It was her first farming experience, and although she faced challenges due to her inexperience, her husband's support and SSEVS's consistent guidance motivated her to persevere. The total expenditure for her radish cultivation was ₹1,500, and she earned ₹13,500 from the harvest.

Encouraged by this success, she adopted the three-tier farming technique on the remaining three kathas as suggested by SSEVS:

- **Lower layer:** Radish crop.
- **Middle layer:** Leafy greens (sag).
- **Upper layer:** Bitter gourd (karela).

These crops collectively earned her a total of ₹23,700:

- Leafy greens: ₹1,200
- Bitter gourd: ₹9,000
- Radish: ₹13,500

Results and Transformation

The income from farming completely transformed the financial condition of Bindu Devi's family. Earlier, arranging two meals a day was a struggle; now, they can afford their children's education, better food and Nutrition, and preparations for future farming activities.

- Paid off the remaining lease amount for the land.
- Spent on children's education and daily needs.
- Planned for the next farming season.

Inspiration for the Community

Bindu Devi's success has inspired other villagers and farmers. She now plans to expand her farming activities by leasing more land and further implementing three-tier farming

techniques. Her story demonstrates that with proper guidance and resources, anyone can improve their financial condition.

Conclusion

Bindu Devi's journey is a tale of struggle, hard work, and hope. With the guidance of SSEVS and the NABARD project, she moved beyond traditional labour to embark on a new path in farming. Her success proves that even small steps can bring significant changes. Today, Bindu Devi is not only a source of pride for her family but also an inspiration for her entire village. Her story stands as evidence that with the right support and determination, one can break free from the shackles of poverty and helplessness.