

## Technical Solutions

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## Game changing rice culture empowers rural women to ensure food security in South Odisha

**Description of the project:** Pragati Koraput works with over 8,000 ethnic women farmers in Koraput District, India, to ensure climate resilient nutritional food security. Activities include training on water saving System of Rice Intensification (SRI) for rice and millets, organic crop diversification with access to indigenous stress tolerant seeds, farm mechanization, and organized collectives for market access. The project has enhanced women's position as change agents in the family and community. It has also increased the communities' understanding of climate impacts on agriculture and the importance of proper conservation and use of resources for climate resilience.

**Climate impact:** System of Rice Intensification (SRI) creates aerobic soil conditions through shallow and intermittent irrigation, which contributes to better crop yield and food security, drop in production costs, and reduced freshwater consumption (~40%). This remarkable water management system in rice paddies, as well as reduced use of chemical fertilizer have resulted in substantial methane reduction, with significant mitigation and adaptation impact.

**Gender impact:** Thanks to the training and mentoring activities, confidence and self-esteem have risen in the mind of 8,200 women beneficiaries from 315 villages. The initiative has created space for the women to participate in local, state and national forums. They take leadership roles in communities to discuss and act on climate issues impacting their lives. They motivate peers to adopt innovative technologies for resilient agriculture. Men in the villages acknowledge their significant contribution, which is transforming the gendered power relations.

**Scalability / replicability:** SRI has the potential to involve many more farmers across the region as it is a methodology with proven results. Replicating SRI organic practices can have far-reaching positive impacts on a large scale, such as increase in food production, releasing the financial burden on farmers and promoting a more sustainable economy, with improved nutritional food security. Applying the principles of SRI in other crops and crop diversification will revive biodiversity and protect soil and water quality.



**PRAGATI, KORAPUT**  
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