

## Backyard Poultry Creates Excellent Impact on Livelihood in East Sikkim



Nandok is an adopted village of East Sikkim

district under National Initiative on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project. It was found that the poultry production systems in Nandok and other nearby villages are traditional and poorly remunerative. Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), East Sikkim made intervention with dual purpose improved birds, which can thrive well under poor feeding and management practices followed in village, can grow faster than indigenous birds and lay more eggs, thus leading to improvement in the livelihood security of the poor. The Vanaraja and Gramapriya bird were identified for intervention, due to multiple colours, looks like indigenous birds and fetch better price in terms of meat and egg in the market

The best poultry producers (having interest, skill and locally available indigenous resources to rear birds) within Self-Help Groups of the adopted village interested in poultry production were identified as first line beneficiaries, who would initially receive assistance from NICRA project. The groups were informed that the remaining members would receive assistance after successful rearing of the birds by first line beneficiaries and the cycle would be rotated from their own investment.

KVK organized several training and demonstration programmes on "Backyard Poultry Rearing" at Nandok as well as at ICAR Sikkim Centre for farmers and farm women. Exposure visits were also conducted to gain more practical knowledge particularly on Vanaraja and Gramapriya birds suitable. After that, KVK supplied 400 nos. of Vanaraja and 400 nos. of Gramapriya birds to 40 beneficiaries of the adopted village. KVK maintained regular contacts with them and suitable suggestions and recommendations were given to solve specific problems. The birds were also given timely vaccination, treatment etc.



In later stage, two farmers became reluctant to take up backyard poultry, then Mrs. Pabitra Sharma, mainly working as farm labour, on her own initiative and in consultation with VCRMC took up their stock of 40 birds and started rearing 60 nos. of Gramapriya birds single handedly with the assistance of KVK, East Sikkim. She brood her chicks up to 45 days of age in a specially designed a brooder house made up of low cost locally available materials i.e. bamboo and wood to maintain required body temperature to curb the chick mortality because of cold stress due to improper brooding practices and to protect from predators. To maintain the temperature in brooder, she used 100 watt bulbs. The movement of the chicks was restricted nearer the heat source with the help of chicks guard made with card board

Before taking up the enterprise, she built a semi- permanent house with rough pucca floor, two-feet brick wall with wire net in uncovered upper portion of the poultry house. She initially started with more than 360 sq. ft. area of size 18 x 20 feet. She also put some wooden nest box inside the house to control the scattered egg laying. The total cost involvement of poultry house was Rs. 10,000/-.

In nursery, chicks were reared by Mrs. Sharma on standard broiler starter ration. In the second phase, she fed the growing birds with vegetable wastes, grass and other kinds of locally available grains like maize and rice polish besides the feed material available from free range. She made available fresh and clean water at all times in

bamboo made watering and feeding trough. Mrs. Pabitra Sharma also periodically supplemented the birds with multivitamin (Ambiplex @ 1ml /lt of water). After attaining maturity (3-4 months) she sells her extra male birds @ Rs. 220/ kg live weight and egg @ Rs. 10/ egg at local market.

With a stock of 60 birds, Mrs. Sharma earned a net profit of approximately, Rs. 11,300/- with a benefit:cost ratio of 1.78. She purchased 100 more chicks from ICAR Sikkim Centre. She has also started hatching 10-12 eggs at a time by using local broody hens and sells chicks to other fellow farmers thus making a horizontal dissemination of the technology. Now, Nandok village under 26 Naitam Nandok GPU in East Sikkim district has become a hub for backyard poultry production with improved birds. Mrs. Sharma has become a role model for the rural youths and farm women for taking improved backyard poultry as a potential practice for agro-preneurship development leading to sustainable livelihood security. Thus KVK, East Sikkim could make an excellent impact in improving the livelihood status of farming community of the region through relevant intervention of climate resilient technology through NICRA project.