

Bhakshya Suraksha Bhavanam

The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has the physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement. Kerala owing to its heavy dependency on neighbouring states for vegetables and other necessary goods cannot keep up with the essential quality standards required. The analytical reports indicate the presence of adulterates, contaminants, preservatives etc. Though aware of the hazards involved, most are not able to afford the premium prices of organic produces either.

It is in this context, Kudumbashree started some initiatives to address this issue through women collective farming. We started a campaign to educate the Kudumbashree members on the need to have safe and nutritious food culture and grow the same in our premises for a healthy living. Named 'Bhakshya Suraksha Bhavanam' (Food Security Home), the campaign aims at self sufficiency in vegetable production. The programme promotes vegetable farming among Kudumbashree women at NHG level. The programme launched on 17th August 2017 across Kerala.

The programme is being implemented through the community resource persons / Master farmers of Kudumbashree agriculture sector. Kudumbashree district mission provide training to the master farmer trainers and they in turn train the master farmers. The master farmer provides training to the NHG members. The programme has been designed in such a way that at NHG level a group of 5 members register in the CDS at a cost of ten rupees. The maximum size of a training session is fixed as 50 members for effectiveness and impact. During the training a kit of vegetables is given to each participant, which consists of five varieties of vegetable seeds worth 20 rupees from Kudumbashree seed production units, Vegetable & Fruit promotion Council Kerala (VFPC), Kerala Agriculture University and other government approved agencies. Each group should cultivate an area of minimum 3 cents and maximum of 25 cents of land and use of grow bags are encouraged for those who have no cultivable land. Special NHGs like elderly NHGs are also taking part in this programme. Present Status of the programme stand as follows.

District	No of NHG members	No of NHG members trained
Thiruvananthapuram	340093	127890
Kollam	228457	49400
Pathanamthitta	145481	61936
Alappuzha	275633	219952
Kottayam	189280	106066
Idukki	172334	112685
Ernakulam	324403	222720
Thrissur	326540	143258
Palakkad	295656	137311
Malappuram	325398	143485
Kozhikode	413415	101456
Wayand	149077	46565
Kannur	315152	163900
Kasargod	189360	91000
Total	3690279	1727624



Impact

So far around 18 lakh Kudumbashree women members have been trained under Bakshya Suraksha Bhavanam and is still proceeding which is expected to engulf much more population, in one of the most successful and unique agricultural programmes the state has ever witnessed. The campaign rejuvenated the community structure of Kudumbashree as 70% of NHGs have already become part

of the training programme. It could create a new lifestyle among the NHG members and inspired many of the NHG members to adopt agricultural activity as means of livelihood.