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TechnoServe, Kellogg Company partner to help farmer women in MP with climate-smart agriculture

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By **Prapti Shah** | March 26, 2019



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This work supports Kellogg’s global signature cause platform, Breakfasts for Better Days, where the organisation has committed to supporting a half million farmers by 2025, focusing on climate-smart agriculture (CSA) techniques to improve livelihoods. As research and TechnoServe’s past experience demonstrates, investing in opportunities for women leads to additional benefits at the household level and beyond; thus the initiative prioritizes the inclusion of women. In addition to training women farmers on CSA, TechnoServe and Kellogg identified an opportunity to increase the role women play in the farm economy while simultaneously enhancing the nutritional intake of participating households by training women in organic kitchen gardening.

The project helps women to establish backyard gardens using organic inputs and farming practices for four nutritionally diverse crops at a time. With fresh produce in the garden, women gain access to better quality vegetables versus going to the market, saving travel time and money while diversifying their families’ access to essential nutrients. Through this partnership, TechnoServe and Kellogg are helping to improve smallholder farmers’ incomes and resilience in Madhya Pradesh. More than 2,060 women have received training in kitchen gardening and backyard vegetable cultivation that can provide an additional source of income as well as nutritious produce. The training modules cover nutrition and sustainable gardening practices such as field preparation, low-cost organic fertilizer preparation, and post-harvest care of vegetables.

The women are also receiving training on improved agricultural practices for maize and wheat production. As rainfall patterns in the region have been erratic, resulting in low yields for traditional crops like maize, wheat and legumes. The kitchen gardens are allowing the women to diversify their crops, growing spinach, fenugreek, beets, carrot, okra, eggplant to help increase their resilience to climate change.

Today, over 80 women have established kitchen gardens at their homesteads, providing their families with green leafy vegetables, which were not a part of their staple diet. Participants were delighted with the first harvest, reporting that the home-grown vegetables are “cleaner” and taste better than those bought from the market, in addition to saving them money.

To date, TechnoServe and Kellogg have collaborated to train 2,060 women in kitchen gardening, and are recruiting more female local resource persons (LRPs).

Testimony by Rachana, a local, whose dream of becoming a teacher came true through TechnoServe's collaboration with the Kellogg Company - "In the beginning, I was very unsure, both about handling a large group of women as well as about my knowledge of agriculture. However, with the training the project gave me, and with experience of being on the job for six months, I now feel more confident about myself. I am also much better at training now and can handle my training group's queries in a more effective manner."

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