Turning Fallow Land into Productive Farmland

Laxmi Majhi's Journey Towards Climate-Resilient Agriculture







A family's first step towards a more diversified livelihood

Laxmi Majhi and her husband, Sudhir Majhi, joined a DRCSC-led mutual cooperation group and farmers' group in search of a more secure livelihood. Increasing climatic uncertainties and unstable income had made it important to explore ways to diversify their livelihood and adapt their farming practices.

FROM LEARNING TO ACTION

Through a combination of training, motivation, practical learning and ongoing technical guidance, the couple was introduced to sustainable ecological farming practices suited to their farming needs. These new insights helped them understand how more environmentally responsible methods could make better use of available resources and support more reliable cultivation over time. Inspired by these approaches and encouraged to apply their learning, they decided to bring their previously uncultivated fallow land under productive use. This marked an important step towards expanding their farming activities and building a more secure, climate-resilient livelihood.

6 CROPS
combined in a mixed-cropping system

8 DECIMALS
of fallow land brought into cultivation

BEFORE

The family primarily depended on conventional, chemical- intensive agriculture and occasional wage labour. Limited income sources increased their exposure to crop losses and livelihood uncertainty.

THE OPPORTUNITY

After learning about DRCSC's work in their village, they engaged with the programme "Transforming Lives Through Climate Adaptive Livelihoods," supported by SODI and BMZ.

Six crops, complementary functions

The family established a mixed-cropping system using six crops with different characteristics and uses. Together, they are intended to diversify production, support soil health and make productive use of available land.

		PRIMARY FUNCTION
01 Dhaincha (Sesbania bispinosa)	GREEN MANURE	Adds plant biomass; when incorporated, can support soil organic matter and fertility.
02 Pigeon pea	DEEP-ROOTED LEGUME	Can fix atmospheric nitrogen and access resources from deeper soil layers.
03 Black gram	LEGUME & GROUND COVER	Contributes to biological nitrogen fixation and can help cover soil and suppress weeds.
04 Maize	FOOD & INCOME CROP	Adds another potential food and income source; nutrient needs depend on crop management.
05 Millets	CLIMATE-ADAPTED CEREALS	Many millet types tolerate moisture stress and diversify grain production.
06 Roselle	DIVERSIFICATION CROP	Offers additional edible produce and potential income depending on variety and use.

What this approach aims to contribute

LAND PRODUCTIVITY
Bring previously fallow land into cultivation.

SOIL HEALTH
Use green manure, legumes and ground-covering crops.

CROP DIVERSITY
Combine six crops with different growing characteristics and uses.

LIVELIHOOD RESILIENCE
Explore multiple harvests and reduce dependence on a single crop.

REPORTING NOTE

The land-use change and crop mix are reported as actions undertaken. Improved soil health, productivity, income and climate resilience are intended contributions not yet quantified outcomes in the information available.

PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS

A first step towards a more resilient farm

By combining six crops on previously fallow land, Laxmi and Sudhir are working to improve land use, diversify agricultural production and apply ecological farming practices. Their initiative reflects a practical step in the transition from conventional farming towards a more diversified, climate-adaptive system.



The family's next step

Laxmi and Sudhir are aiming to cultivate seasonal vegetables on a portion of the land. Continued learning, technical guidance and tracking crop performance can help them understand which practices work best under their local conditions.

Track the change over time

Land & crops	Area cultivated; crops established; crop survival and growth.
Harvest & food	Harvest quantity, household consumption and crop sales.
Household economics	Input costs, sale proceeds and net returns, compared with a documented baseline.
Soil & climate	Soil-management practices and crop performance during moisture stress, where observed.
Next diversification	Whether vegetables are planted, area allocated and harvest results.

"A small area of previously fallow land has become an opportunity for learning, crop diversification and climate-adaptive farming."

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