Rice Fallow Divergence: Catalysing the Pulses Revolution in Jharkhand?

Dr Sridhar Gutam, ICAR Research Complex for Eastern Region, India
Introduction

The state of Jharkhand came into existence by bifurcating the Bihar state in the year 2000. It is the forest hub and is rich in mineral resources contributing to 40% of the India’s mineral resources. However, as per UNDP, out of 33 million population, 12.62 million are poor and 57% of the children who are less than five years are under malnutrition. Though 80% of the population are involved in farming, only 32% of the area is under net sown out of which only 12% is irrigated. The per capita availability of food grains is 546g but then the accessibility of the same is in question as 39% of the population live under below poverty line earning $1 a day (as purchasing power parity). Due to various socioeconomic constraints, only 1/4th of the net sown area is utilized in Rabi and most of the lands are left as fallow. In the year 2000-01, Rabi pulses (blackgram, chickpea, field pea, greengram, horsegram, sweet pea and lentil) production was 3 lakh tonnes and the area was 6 lakh hectares. From the year 2010-11 onwards, the National Food Security Mission - Pulses is being implemented in all the 24 districts of the state. At this backdrop, this paper attempts to find out what are the possible drivers for the increase in area and production of pulses in the state of Jharkhand.

Results and Discussion

The stage of ground water development (ratio of annual ground water draft and net annual ground water availability in percentage) is 30% for Jharkhand whereas, the all India is 58%. Improved irrigation system is being implemented under Rastrriya Krishi Vikas Yojana since 2009-10 and Waste Land & Rice Fallow Development Program since 2010-11. Under the micro irrigation scheme which is in operation since 2005-06, assistance is being provided to the farmers to the tune of 90% of the unit cost. Currently, the area under micro irrigation is approximately 16,000 hectares and it is expected to raise to 90,000 hectares by 2017-18. At this backdrop, this paper attempts to find out what are the possible drivers for the increase in area and production of pulses in the state of Jharkhand. In the year 2000-01, Rabi pulses (blackgram, chickpea, field pea, greengram, horsegram, sweet pea and lentil) production was 3 lakh tonnes and the area was 6 lakh hectares. From the year 2010-11 onwards, the National Food Security Mission - Pulses is being implemented in all the 24 districts of the state. At this backdrop, this paper attempts to find out what are the possible drivers for the increase in area and production of pulses in the state of Jharkhand. In the year 2010-11, the National Food Security Mission - Pulses is being implemented in all the 24 districts of the state. At this backdrop, this paper attempts to find out what are the possible drivers for the increase in area and production of pulses in the state of Jharkhand.

Conclusion

Now the question is was it due to higher MSP announced for Rabi pulses by the government or due to the facilitation of the irrigation, supply of seeds and inputs, advice and the marketability contributed to the increase in area and production of pulses? The answer is that all the factors had contributed but the availability of water played a major role. It is interesting to learn that a construction of an earthen dam in the village Dalgando, District Giridih brought 15 acre area under irrigation enabled the farmers to grow two or more crops in a year and earn total annual income of one lakh! Now with the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, the vision for the second Green Revolution from the eastern region of India, establishment of community seed banks, making available quality seeds & improved agronomic practices, and better price support would further encourage farmers to increase the pulses production in the region.

Name and Contact Information

Sridhar Gutam, Senior Scientist, ICAR RCER Research Centre, Ranchi 834010. <gutam2000@gmail.com>