



SUCCESS STORY

Success Story: Empowering Women Farmers through Adoption of Machan-Type Goat Sheds

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Background

In the rural areas of Sankarghola, Ghilaguri and Boitamari gaon panchayat in Bongaigaon district of Assam, goat rearing has traditionally been an important supplementary livelihood activity for small and marginal farming households. Women play a significant role in the management of goats, including feeding, cleaning, health care and day-to-day husbandry. However, traditional goat housing practices often exposed the animals to damp floors, poor ventilation, unhygienic conditions and disease risks, particularly during the monsoon season.

Recognising the potential of goat rearing as a source of regular income for rural women, Seven Sisters Development Assistance (SeSTA), Bongaigaon arranged Community Investment Fund (CIF) micro-loans of amount Rs.12000.00 as working capital to 120 numbers of women's of Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) under Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ASRLM).

SESTA Bongaigaon, in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bongaigaon, organized a capacity-building training programme on scientific goat farming for women members of the Community Livelihood Federation (CLF) during the year 2026. The initiative was undertaken to strengthen the knowledge and skills of women farmers and promote goat rearing as a sustainable livelihood activity. The participants were provided with practical knowledge on improving productivity and reducing mortality through improved management practices.

The Intervention

As part of the technological intervention, KVK Bongaigaon demonstrated and promoted the use of a machan-type goat shed. The raised-floor housing system helps maintain better hygiene and ventilation, reduces contact of goats with damp floors and waste materials and facilitates easier collection and management of manure. The technology is particularly suitable for small and marginal women farmers as it can be adapted to locally available materials and requires comparatively low investment.

The intervention aims to enable women CLF members to adopt improved goat-rearing practices, increase goat productivity, reduce health-related losses and generate additional household income. Through technical training and improved housing technology, SESTA and KVK Bongaigaon are supporting women in

developing goat farming as a viable and sustainable livelihood enterprise.



Fig 1. Collaborative training programme of SeSTA with KVK, Bongaigaon for Women goat farmers

The Machan-type goat shed provides a raised platform for keeping goats above the ground. The design allows better air circulation, keeps the animals away from dampness and facilitates the easy collection and removal of goat droppings. One of the key strengths of the Machan-type goat shed is its simplicity. It does not necessarily require expensive infrastructure or sophisticated technology. The concept can be

adapted to local conditions and constructed using locally available materials.

The women beneficiaries were encouraged and supported to construct and use the sheds using locally available materials. Along with improved housing, the beneficiaries were motivated to follow better goat management practices, including regular cleaning, proper feeding, observation of animal health and timely attention to sick animals.

For many women, the intervention represented more than the construction of a shed. It introduced a practical change in their everyday goat-rearing practices and helped them view goat farming as a more organised and economically useful livelihood activity.



Fig 2. Adoption of Machan-type goat sheds by women CIF loan beneficiaries

Visible Changes in Goat Management

Following the adoption of Machan-type sheds, the women farmers observed several positive changes in the management of their goats. The raised floor helped reduce direct contact of the animals with wet and dirty surfaces. The sheds were easier to clean and maintain, while improved ventilation created a more comfortable environment for the animals.

The intervention also made it easier for the women to manage goat droppings and maintain cleanliness around the shed. Better housing conditions contributed to healthier and more active animals and reduced the problems commonly associated with damp and unhygienic housing.



Fig 3. Improved goat rearing practices after technology adoption

Impact on Women Farmers

The adoption of Machan-type goat sheds has strengthened the confidence of women beneficiaries in goat rearing as a livelihood activity. Women are now taking greater ownership of their goat units and are more conscious of animal housing, hygiene and

regular management.

Improved goat management has the potential to contribute to better survival and growth of animals, enabling families to obtain income through the sale of goats and kids. The additional income can support household expenses, children's education, nutrition and other family needs.

The experience of the women farmers of these villages demonstrates that even a small improvement in livestock housing can bring meaningful changes in animal care and livelihood management. The intervention is therefore particularly relevant for small and marginal farmers who may not have the resources to invest in costly livestock infrastructure.

The Way Forward

The experience of these demonstrations highlights the importance of combining livestock-based livelihood activities with improved management practices. Continued technical guidance on goat nutrition, vaccination, deworming, breeding, disease prevention and market linkage can further increase the benefits of the intervention.

The successful adoption of Machan-type goat sheds by women farmers can also serve as a demonstration model for other villages in Bongaigaon district. Peer learning, exposure visits and farmer-to-farmer sharing of experiences can encourage more households to adopt improved goat housing and scientific goat-rearing practices.

Conclusion

The initiative demonstrates that simple, locally adaptable innovations can create significant improvements in the lives of rural women. With continued support in animal health, feeding, breeding and marketing, goat rearing can become an increasingly sustainable source of income for women farmers and contribute to the overall economic resilience of rural households in Bongaigaon district, Assam.