



## Empowerment of Tribal Women through Desi Chicken Enterprise in Pethanaickenpalayam Block of Salem District in Tamil Nadu

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**ABSTRACT:** The predominant objective of popularizing desi chicken backyard poultry farming in rural India is to provide better income opportunities to the poor farmers and people from indigenous communities living in remote areas especially in hilly area. Desi Chicken enterprise is a beneficial enterprise, ensuring regular income and livelihood of tribal women farmers and also can address the issues of food insecurity and malnutrition. The activities such as basic training and technical guidance to the beneficiaries of the scheme, procurement and supply of inputs such as birds, cages, feed and egg incubator along with power back up were carried out by Veterinary University Training and Research Centre, Salem. A total of 50 tribal women were selected from Sengattuputhur village and formed into 5 common livelihood Groups. Total number of birds alive at the end of one year was  $3.04 \pm 0.04$  out of six birds supplied to each beneficiary. The age (days) at laying first egg was  $169.19 \pm 0.31$ . Hatchability (%) of eggs using egg incubator was  $80.82 \pm 1.21$ . Monthly additional income per family was INR  $928 \pm 31.87$ . It was concluded that the desi bird rearing is a very beneficial enterprise, ensuring additional regular income and plays the major role in empowering tribal women.

**Keywords:** SBGF, Desi bird enterprise, Pethanaickenpalayam block, Salem.

### INTRODUCTION

Desi bird rearing is a beneficial enterprise, ensuring regular income and livelihood of tribal women farmers. There is evidence that investments in small scale poultry farming generate great returns and contribute to poverty reduction and increased food security in regions where a large share of the population keeps some poultry birds (Jensen and Dolberg 2003; Mack, *et al.*, 2005; Pica-Ciamarra and Otte 2010; Jha and Chakrabarti 2017).

There is also growing evidence to demonstrate the role of rural poultry farming in enhancing the food and nutrition security of the poorest households, reducing the livelihood vulnerability and insecurity and promotion of gender equity (Ahuja and Sen 2007). In general, desi bird rearing is a very beneficial enterprise, ensuring additional regular income and plays the major role in empowering tribal women (Sribalaji *et al.*, 2020).

Sengattuputhur is a small Village in Pethanaickenpalayam Block in Salem District of Tamil Nadu State, India. Pethanaickenpalayam block in Salem District of Tamil Nadu is having higher poverty issues.

This block has high concentration of unprivileged sections namely Schedule castes and tribes (42.4%), who historically possess poor assets and social-cultural obstacles to improve their livelihood and life style. Pethanaickenpalayam block is also known for dry land-based agriculture. Here the monsoon uncertainties play havoc in their day-to-day activities. There was a need of external support for sustaining of their livelihoods to mitigate the drought. Hence, the project was funded by State Balanced Growth Fund, Tamil Nadu (SBGF) and implemented by Veterinary University Training and Research Centre, Salem at Sengattuputhur village in Pethanaickenpalayam block for the empowerment of tribal Women through desi chicken enterprise.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Pethanaickenpalayam block is a revenue block in the Salem district of Tamil Nadu and it has a total of 36 panchayat villages. The Project implemented area is called Sengattuputhur village is comes under Periyakalryan Hills Melnadu Panchayath near Karumandurai. It is located 39 KM towards East from District headquarters Salem and 291 KM from State capital Chennai. There are around 100 families of

Scheduled tribal population in Sengattuputhur and nearby Kovilputhur village.

The project entitled "Empowerment of tribal women by developing desi chicken enterprise in Salem District was funded by State Balance Growth Fund, Tamil Nadu (SBGF) and implemented by Veterinary University Training and Research Centre, Salem at Sengattuputhur village.

A total of 50 poor tribal women were selected from Sengattuputhur village and nearby Kovilputhur village in Pethanaickenpalayam block based on their income level and their interest on rearing desi bird. The selected beneficiaries were formed into 5 common livelihood Groups. The activities such as basic technical training and technical guidance to the beneficiaries of the scheme, procurement and supply of inputs such as birds, cages, feed and egg incubator along with power back up was carried out by Veterinary University Training and Research Centre, Salem.

Each beneficiary was provided with 6 (1 Male +5 Female) desi birds at 3 months age along with one night shelter, 60 kg poultry feed along with feeder and one unit of community incubator with 600 eggs capacity with one power back up for uninterrupted power

supply. The worming and vaccination were carried out by the technical staff of Animal Husbandry Department and Veterinary University Training and Research Centre, Salem in the study period. At the end of one year of the project the data were collected and statistically analyzed by adopting standard procedures as described by Snedecor and Cochran (1994).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The total number of birds alive at the end of one year was  $3.04 \pm 0.04$  out of six birds supplied to each beneficiary. The age (days) at laying first egg was  $169.19 \pm 0.31$ . The number of eggs produced per bird per cycle was  $13.38 \pm 0.11$ . The overall hatchability of eggs without incubator was  $68.54 \pm 0.54$  percent, whereas the hatchability of eggs using incubator was  $80.82 \pm 1.21$  percent. The monthly additional income per family was Rs.  $928 \pm 31.87$  due to this scheme. The constraints faced by the beneficiaries in desi bird rearing scheme were assessed by ranking the constraints listed in pretested questionnaires. The major constraints ranked are listed below.

**Table 1: Assessment of performance of birds.**

Sr. No.	Parameters	Production performance of birds*
1.	Total number of beneficiaries	50
2.	Total number of birds distributed to the beneficiaries	300 (5+1 *50)
3.	Number of birds alive at the end of scheme period	$3.04 \pm 0.04(*50)$
4.	Age at laying eggs (days)	$169.19 \pm 0.31$
5.	Number of eggs produced per bird per cycle	$13.38 \pm 0.11$
6.	Non egg incubator users (%)	48.00
7.	Egg incubator users (%)	52.00
8.	Hatchability (%) of eggs using without incubator	$68.54 \pm 0.54$
9.	Hatchability (%) of eggs using egg incubator	$80.82 \pm 1.21$
10.	Monthly additional income per family (Rs.)	$928 \pm 31.87$

**Table 2: Constraints analysis in desi bird rearing scheme.**

Sr. No.	Constraints	Rank	Percentage (%)
1.	Loss of chicks by attack of predators	I	65
2.	Conflict among the beneficiaries while using community egg incubator.	II	28
3.	Mortality of birds due to diseases	III	07

From this study, it can be inferred that supplementary income of tribal women is possible through desi birds rearing in backyard. Similar findings were also reported by Saha (2003); Chaturvedani *et al.* (2015) on empowerment of tribal people through backyard poultry farming. Similarly, Sribalaji *et al.* (2020) also reported that the monthly additional income per family through similar desi bird rearing scheme in Chinnagoundapuram village was (Rs.)  $1450 \pm 37$  and it could be inferred that the lower level of monthly income in the present study was mainly due to the loss of chicks by predators attack.

## CONCLUSIONS

It concluded that the desi bird rearing is a very much beneficial enterprise, ensuring additional regular income and plays the major role in empowering tribal women.

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**Conflict of Interest.** None.

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