

BRIEF SUMMARY - FEMINISATION OF FARMING

The Marathwada region of Maharashtra saw a sustained drought over four years between 2012 and 2016, and it was the women of the region who suffered the worst effects. They had no land ownership rights, which limited their access to resources like finance, markets, water and government services for getting back on the right track.

But now, these very women are preserving seeds and learning to grow a diverse range of nutrient-rich crops using organic farming techniques, under a programme known as the 'one-acre model' of farming. Being trained under Swayam Shikshan Prayog (a not-for-profit organization), these women farmers have become knowledge-bearers in their own right, as they are able to make informed decisions related to what crops to grow, what to consume and how much to sell.

Eco India tells this story through the lens of Shubhangi Kulkarni, who lives in Bawi village in eastern Maharashtra. She now successfully practices sustainable agriculture that has helped her ensure food security, health and income for her family.

In Maharashtra, 70% of the total female workers are involved in agriculture activities, despite which women are perceived as labourers and seldom as decision makers. The women-led model of climate-resilient farming has helped turn the tide on this marginalisation. Now, like Shubhangi, over 58,000 women farmers and households have implemented climate-resilient practices on their farms.