

Drudgery Reduction of Tribal Women in Rice Production

**Gayatri Moharana, Rabi Sankar Panda, Jyoti Nayak,
Chaitrali S. Mhatre and P.K. Rout**

*ICAR- Central Institute for Women in Agriculture, Bhubaneswar
E-mail id: gayatri.bibhuti@gmail.com*

Abstract—Agriculture is the main occupation of rural families. Rural women are helping to 'feed the world' using inadequately designed and poorly made hand tools. Lack the income, credit and training needed to shift to more efficient and productive technologies. Most of the farm women participate actively during uprooting, transplanting, harvesting and post harvest activities in paddy. A study has been undertaken in Koraput district of Odisha to identify the roles and issues of tribal women in paddy cultivation. It was observed that who are involved in the production of paddy completely, put in an average of 7-8 hrs/ day for various activities using traditional tools and implements which are also used by men. Traditionally women were using manually operated farm tools and equipment, their work life is characterized by long hours of work, awkward postures and drudgery experiences due to workload and unsuitable farming equipments. The data revealed that major pre-occupation of women labour was transplanting(100%), carrying head load (98.75 %) followed by weeding (50.5 %). It has been realized that the needs of men and women with respect to technologies differ because of the differences in preference, priorities and working environment. This could be suitably addressed through introduction of women friendly ergonomically designed farm tools and equipment through well designed and targeted interventions. It was observed that in Odisha, there has been an increasing trend in participation of women in agricultural labour force. Majority of them are employed on a seasonal and often casual or temporary basis. They largely use traditional methods/ tools as many of the farm equipments are not suitable and are subject to extreme drudgeries. Therefore, to address the drudgery, occupational health hazards, and safety issues and increase work efficiency of farm women, gender friendly tools & equipment should be made available for women farmers involved in paddy cultivation. This will help in reducing drudgery, saving time and energy and increase in work efficiency of tribal. It will also help to save money and provide income generation opportunities during leisure time.