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Constraints faced and suggestions offered by beneficiary farmers for effective conduct of cluster frontline demonstrations (CFLDs) on oilseeds in Telangana state

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Abstract

To increase area, production and productivity of oilseeds crops in India, the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) initiated Cluster Frontline Demonstrations of Oilseeds during 2015-16 under National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP) project in cooperation with Directorate of Extension, ICAR, New Delhi, continued till 2017-18. The present study was conducted in Nagarkurnool and Wanaparthy districts of Telangana state to study Constraints faced and Suggestions offered by Beneficiary farmers for Effective Conduct of Cluster frontline Demonstrations (CFLDs) on oilseeds in Telangana State. Sixty beneficiaries were selected for the study. Farmers were asked to elicit their constraints identified for the study. All the constraints were ranked based on the percentage of farmers under respective constraint. A majority of beneficiaries faced high price of certified/improved seeds, market inaccessibility in some areas, lack of technical guidance from extension personnel, delay in availability of quality seeds at sowing time etc.

Keywords: Cluster frontline demonstrations, constraints, beneficiaries, suggestions

Introduction

India's agricultural industry is appropriately referred to as the "backbone" of the country's economy. Oilseed crops are the second most important determinant of agricultural economy, next only to cereals within the segment of field crops. The self-sufficiency in oilseeds attained through "Yellow Revolution" during early 1990's could not be sustained beyond a short period. Oilseeds play an essential role in agriculture in many regions of the world. Despite being the fourth largest oilseed crop producing country in the world, India is one of the largest importers of vegetable oils. It has 20.8% of the total area under cultivation globally, accounting for 10% of global production. The production of oilseeds in India has been growing for the last five years. During FY24, the total oilseeds production in the country was recorded at 396.69 lakh tonnes. The production of oilseeds during FY24 was higher by 20.38 lakh tonnes than the average oilseeds production of 376.30 lakh tonnes over the past five years (IBEF, 2023) [3]. The country produces Groundnut, Soybean, Sunflower, Sesamum, Niger seed, Mustard, and Safflower oilseeds. The area covered in Telangana state for the oilseed crops cultivation was 3.040 lakh Ha, the total oilseeds production in the Telangana state was recorded at 5.274 lakh tonnes, the yield was 1735 Kg/Ha during the year 2023-24 Oilseeds.dac.gov, (2024) [1]. Despite vast cultivation areas, farmers face challenges like low adoption of improved practices, rainfed conditions, and

poor extension support. To address these issues, Cluster Front Line Demonstrations (CFLDs) were introduced under national initiatives like the NMOOP and later under NFSM (Oilseeds), aiming to demonstrate improved technologies directly on farmers' fields, allowing them to witness the results under real farming conditions. Although CFLDs have been conducted in the state for several years, there is still limited evidence on how much they have actually helped in improving farmers' knowledge, adoption of best practices, productivity, and incomes.

Materials and Methods

Two KVKs i.e., KVK Palem, which are conducting CFLDs on oilseeds in a larger area in the crops like groundnut and castor was selected for the study. The CFLDs pertaining to oilseed crops i.e., Groundnut and Castor was selected for the study. Two districts i.e., Nagarkurnool and Wanaparthy which are covering the highest areas under selected oilseed crops were selected for the study. A total of 2 mandals were taken from each district, three villages were selected from each mandal making total of six villages through stratified random sampling for the study. Sixty beneficiaries who were adopting CFLDs on oilseeds from selected KVKs were chosen for the study. Data was collected from the respondents using open-ended personal interview method by the researcher.

Results and Discussion

Constraints faced by beneficiary farmers: The input constraints elicited by beneficiary farmers were tabulated and expressed in Table 1. A great majority 86.66% of the farmers perceived the problem of delay in availability of quality seeds at the time of sowing hence it was ranked first among the input constraints. 60.00% of farmers expressed that there was insufficient quantity of seed is provided under the programme was assigned rank II, 53.33% farmers had

perceived that there was non-availability of fertilizers and bio-fertilizers in required quantity and at required time was assigned and ranked as III and 48.33 percent of farmers felt there was irregular supply of recommended plant protection chemicals leading to crop loss due to pests and diseases and was assigned rank IV. The reasons might be due to late procurement, weak coordination. Swami *et al.* (2023)^[4] and Vamshi *et al.* (2022)^[5].

Table 1: Input constraints faced by Beneficiary farmers of Cluster Frontline Demonstrations (CFLDs) on oilseeds

S. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Input Constraints				
1.	Delay in availability of quality seeds at sowing time	52	86.66	I
2.	Lack of timely input supply coordination through CFLD agencies	32	53.33	V
3.	Irregular supply of recommended plant protection chemicals	39	65.00	IV
4.	Non-availability of fertilizers in required quantity and time	47	78.33	II
5.	Limited availability of bio-fertilizers during sowing	41	68.33	III

The Financial constraints elicited by beneficiary farmers were tabulated and expressed in Table 2. Among the financial constraints, majority of the farmers 73.33% had expressed the constraint high price of certified/improved seed varieties due to affordability issues was assigned as rank I, 66.66% of farmers perceived plant protection

measures as very expensive so it was assigned as rank II, 65.00% of farmers expressed increasing cost of farm labour during peak operations leading to increase of cost of cultivation was assigned as rank III and 46.67 had expressed higher rate of interest increasing debt risk was assigned rank IV. Swami *et al.* (2023)^[4] and Verma *et al.* (2018)^[6].

Table 2: Financial constraints faced by Beneficiary farmers of Cluster Frontline Demonstrations (CFLDs) on oilseeds

S. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Financial constraints				
1	Higher rate of interest of loan	28	46.67	IV
2	Increasing cost of farm labour during peak operations	39	65.00	III
3	High price of certified/improved seed varieties	44	73.33	I
4	Expensive plant protection measures	40	66.66	II

The Technical constraints elicited by beneficiary farmers were tabulated and expressed in Table 3. Among technical constraints majority of farmers 68.33% had expressed the constraint limited technical guidance from extension personnel as was assigned rank I, 65.00% expressed poor awareness of weed and nutrient management practices and

was assigned rank II, 60.00% inadequate knowledge of seed treatment techniques, 51.67% limited knowledge of integrated pest and disease management practices, 48.33% lack of awareness about critical stages of irrigation and was assigned ranks III, IV, V respectively. Gamit *et al.* (2018)^[2].

Table 3: Technical constraints faced by Beneficiary farmers of Cluster Frontline Demonstrations (CFLDs) on oilseeds

S. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Technical constraints				
1	Limited technical guidance from extension personnel	41	68.33	I
2	Lack of awareness about critical irrigation stages	29	48.33	V
3	Inadequate knowledge of seed treatment techniques	36	60.00	III
4	Limited knowledge of integrated pest and disease management practices	31	51.67	IV
5	Poor awareness of weed and nutrient management practices	38	65.00	II

The Marketing constraints elicited by beneficiary farmers were tabulated and expressed in Table 4. Among marketing constraints majority of farmers 73.33 had expressed market in accessibility in some areas facing higher transport costs and fewer market opportunities was assigned rank I, 70.00% had expressed price crash during peak harvest season

affecting the income and was assigned rank II, 65.00% expressed lack of proper storage infrastructure at village level or farm level and was assigned rank III, 50.00% had expressed inadequate transport facilities for timely market access and was assigned rank IV. Swami *et al.* (2023)^[4].

Table 4: Marketing constraints faced by Beneficiary farmers of Cluster Frontline Demonstrations (CFLDs) on oilseeds

S. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Marketing constraints				
1.	Price crash during peak harvest season affecting income	42	70.00	II
2.	Market inaccessibility in some areas	44	73.33	I
3.	Lack of proper storage infrastructure at village or farm level	39	65.00	III
4.	Inadequate transport facilities for timely market access	30	50.00	IV

Suggestions by the beneficiary farmers about CFLDs in oilseeds

Suggestions expressed by beneficiary farmers were tabulated and expressed in Table 5. A majority of beneficiary farmers expressed to increase timely field visits by extension staff 86.66% hence it is ranked I among all suggestions. 83.33% to organize IPDM awareness camps in CFLD villages was assigned rank II. The farmers also

expressed suggestions like 81.66 demonstration of seed treatment techniques before sowing, 78.33% provide training on weed management, 75.00 to issue irrigation stages advisories through SMS or posters, 70.00% to monitor post CFLD adoption of technical practices, 63.33% provide institutional support for produce buy back, 55.00% promote peer learning with farmer groups were assigned ranks III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII respectively.

Table 5: Suggestions by the beneficiary farmers about CFLDs in oilseeds (n=60)

S. No.	Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1	Demonstration of seed treatment techniques before sowing	49	81.66	III
2	Monitor post-CFLD adoption of technical practices	42	70.00	VI
3	Increase timely field visits by extension staff	52	86.66	I
4	Issue irrigation stage advisories through SMS or posters	45	75.00	V
5	Promote peer learning with farmer groups	33	55.00	VIII
6	Organize IPDM awareness camps in CFLD villages	50	83.33	II
7	Provide institutional support for produce buy back	38	63.33	VII
8	Provide training on weed and nutrient management	47	78.33	IV

Conclusion

The results revealed from the study that a great majority felt high price for certified and improved seed varieties, price crash during peak harvest season affecting income of farmers, having very limited technical guidance from extension personnel, delay in availability of quality seeds at time of sowing, increasing cost of farm labour during peak operations, insufficient quantity of seed provided under the programme, non-availability of fertilizers and bio fertilizers in required quantity at required time, limited knowledge of integrated pest and disease management practices and lack of awareness about critical stages of irrigation. The suggestions expressed by beneficiary farmers are increase timely field visits by extension staff, to organize IPDM awareness camps in CFLD villages, demonstrate seed treatment techniques before sowing, provide training on weed management, to issue irrigation stages advisories through SMS or posters, to monitor post CFLD adoption of technical practices, provide institutional support for produce buy back and promote peer learning with farmer groups. A suitable strategy has been developed keeping in view of the results obtained in the study.

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