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GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

Promoting PDMC Implementation in Haryana Through Micro Irrigation Training Programs

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Water scarcity is one of the most urgent threats to rural livelihoods and food security in India. Smallholder farmers, who depend on rainfall and limited irrigation sources, face declining groundwater, erratic monsoons, and rising costs for energy and inputs. To build resilience and ensure sustainable crop production, communities must shift from centralized, input heavy irrigation to locally owned, water efficient systems. With this back drop, MICA, Haryana gave IndiaNPIM, an opportunity to conduct 10 training programs in 10 villages of Jind district of Haryana. The training program aimed to promote farmer adoption of micro irrigation under the RKVY — Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) initiative, for improving water use efficiency and farm incomes. Its core objectives were to promote water conserving practices and advanced irrigation technologies; raise awareness about government subsidies and streamline PDMC portal registration; and encourage crop diversification alongside appropriate modern machinery use. The training programs were designed to equip farmers with the knowledge and skills to adopt micro-irrigation systems—such as drip and sprinkler irrigation—that can save 30–60% of water and boost crop yields by 20–50%.

The Participants and Distinguished Resource Persons

Sponsored by MICADA, Haryana, and organized by IndiaNPIM and R G Foundation, the training programs in 10 villages of Jind and targeted over 1500 enthusiastic farmers, for intensive learning and practical demonstrations.
The training programs also brought together a diverse and highly qualified team of resource persons, each contributing unique expertise to the initiative. The resource panel included government officials, scientists, technical experts, academic professionals, and progressive farmers, ensuring a holistic approach to farmer education and capacity building.

Among the key figures was Shri Attinder Pal, Executive Engineer, MICADA, Jind and Shri Mukesh Kumar, SDO, MICADA, Jind, who played pivotal administrative and technical role in overseeing water management projects and facilitating government schemes like 'Per Drop More Crop.' Their efforts were complemented by Shri Pawan Kumar, Junior Engineer, who managed the technical roll-out and quality monitoring of micro-irrigation infrastructure, working closely with farmers to ensure effective implementation.

The scientific community was well represented by experts such as Dr. B.P. Rana, a retired scientist from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jind, renowned for his work in crop management and technology extension. Dr. Subhash Chander from HAMETI, Jind, brought deep knowledge of natural farming and sustainable practices, regularly training both farmers and agricultural officers. Academic voices like Dr. Raveena and Dr. Ankit Gill from Baba Mastnath University contributed insights into plant-water relations, soil science, and sustainable crop production, bridging the gap between research and field application.

Technical expertise was further strengthened by Engineer Karamveer Singh, who led projects on pond rejuvenation, grey water treatment, and the implementation of micro-irrigation projects in different districts of Haryana. Engineer Ravi Kumar from KVK, Jind, provided hands-on guidance in the design and maintenance of micro-irrigation systems, ensuring that farmers could transition from traditional flood irrigation to more efficient methods.

A unique strength of the program was the inclusion of progressive farmers such as Shri Ishwar Singh, Shri Sultan Singh, and Shri Manvir Singh. These individuals have successfully adopted micro-irrigation and natural farming techniques, serving as role models and master trainers for their peers. Their real-life experiences and willingness to share practical knowledge inspired confidence and peer learning among participants.

Collectively, the resource persons ensured that the training program was both scientifically robust and practically relevant. Their combined efforts not only educated farmers on the technical and financial aspects of micro-irrigation but also motivated them to adopt water-efficient and sustainable agricultural practices. The diversity and depth of the resource team played a crucial role in the program's success, fostering a collaborative environment where knowledge was shared, and innovation was encouraged.

Key Highlights and Learnings from the Training Programme

The highlight of the program was its focus on micro-irrigation techniques such as drip and sprinkler systems, which were presented as effective solutions to the region's growing water scarcity. Participants learned about the installation, operation, and maintenance of these systems, as well as the economic and agronomic benefits, including water savings of 30–60% and yield improvements of 20–50%. The training also emphasized the importance of government schemes like the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC), guiding farmers on how to access subsidies and support through the MICADA portal. The agenda was comprehensive, covering topics such as water use efficiency, fertigation, mulching, crop diversification, and the integration of modern agricultural machinery. Sessions were delivered by a diverse panel of experts, including government officials, scientists, and progressive farmers, who shared real-life examples and case studies to make the content relatable and actionable. The participatory approach encouraged open discussions, experience sharing, and hands-on learning, which was highly appreciated by the attendees.

The Impact, Outcomes and Benefits of the Training Programmes

The micro-irrigation training programs conducted in Haryana have made a significant impact on the region's agricultural landscape. Haryana, ranking ninth in India for micro-irrigation adoption, has seen over 130,000 hectares brought under the RKVY "Per Drop More Crop" initiative.

The training sessions were well-received, with 82% of participants stating that the content was new to them and expressing a strong intention to adopt micro-irrigation in their daily farming practices. The programs were praised for their practical orientation, especially in demonstrating the effectiveness of drip irrigation for cotton and horticultural crops.

Feedback from participants highlighted high satisfaction levels, with an average rating of 8.1 out of 10. Most farmers found the training easy to understand, and trainers were commended for their knowledge and clarity. The majority felt that the duration and content of the sessions were appropriate, and 81% reported tangible benefits from attending. Despite these successes, the assessment also identified several challenges. The closure of the subsidy registration portal has prevented many interested farmers from accessing financial support for micro-irrigation systems. Delays in payment release, the need for better post-installation support, and calls for greater departmental involvement and transparency were common concerns among participants. Suggestions for improvement included faster subsidy disbursement, improved material quality, less dependence on company dealers, and the establishment of customer care centers. In conclusion, the micro-irrigation training programs in Haryana have effectively increased awareness, adoption, and satisfaction among farmers, leading to improved water management and agricultural productivity. Addressing operational challenges and expanding support mechanisms will be crucial for sustaining and amplifying these positive outcomes in the future.