



Nutri Garden Project

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Why is in news? PM appreciates 'Nutri Garden Project' in Lakshadweep

- The Prime Minister has appreciated 'Nutri Garden Project' in Lakshadweep. He said that this initiative has shown how enthusiastic the people of Lakshadweep are about learning and adopting new things.
- The project was launched as a result of the development **objective of self-reliant India** in which vegetable seeds has been provided to 1000 farmers.
- Moreover, 7000 chickens of indigenous breeds were distributed to the women of Lakshadweep families with income less than Rs.600 under the **Backyard Poultry Scheme**.

Nutri Garden:

- A nutri-garden project is **a cost-effective model to grow nutrient-rich crops** for personal or community consumption to promote good health and well-being.
- It helps **tackle both under-nutrition and over-nutrition** by adopting a sustainable life cycle approach.
- Nutri-garden is **advanced form of kitchen garden** in which vegetables are grown as a source of food and income in a more scientific way.
- **For small and marginal farmers**, nutri-garden can contribute to the family diet and provide several other benefits, particularly for women.
- Micronutrient malnutrition can be overcome by including a variety of fruits and vegetables in daily food basket.
- **Nutri Garden Odisha is one such successful model.**
- A Nutri Garden project **must have children as the primary participants**, and should be **executed in a phased manner**.

Phase 1:

- **Nutri Garden in Anganwadi:** The project should be undertaken in a few government schools and Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) across a district.
- It will **encourage local availability** of diversified vegetables for mid-day meals.
- Its successful implementation would require convergence among the different departments namely, agriculture, horticulture and other related functionaries.
- It will **enhance nutritional literacy** among students, and make them understand the basis of choice of crops (based on season and topography) and their nutritional content.
- Based on the outcomes and learning from the pilot, the project should further be scaled-up to include all government schools in the district.

Phase 2:

- Under this phase, the project could be **extended to private schools**, which could adopt the culture of nutri-gardens.
- Learning by doing approach: Schools should **create nutri-clubs** as part of extra-curricular activities and promote organic farming as part of the curriculum.

Benefits of Nutri Gardens:

- It promotes safe and healthy eating habits among students.
- It provides nutritious food that can address micro & macro nutrient deficiencies and hidden hunger in children.
- It provides better use of vacant land lying idle at the schools and AWCs (Aangan Waadi Centres).
- It also ensures an inexpensive, regular and handy supply of fresh vegetables, which are basic to nutrition.
- It brings diversification in the menu of mid-day meals at government schools and AWCs.
- It turns children into catalysts who promote awareness and behavioural changes in society.

Challenges:

- Lack of availability of vacant land, water and other necessary infrastructure to create a nutri-garden.
- Insufficient funds from the administration.
- Unmotivated staff at AWCs and schools due to their existing workload and no absence of incentives
- Difficulty in bringing government functionaries on a single platform to effectively implement the concept.