

Nutrition-sensitive aquatic food systems boost access to nutritious foods Odisha, India

Research, investments and policy work together to boost sustainable fish supply and consumption to tackle malnutrition in women and children



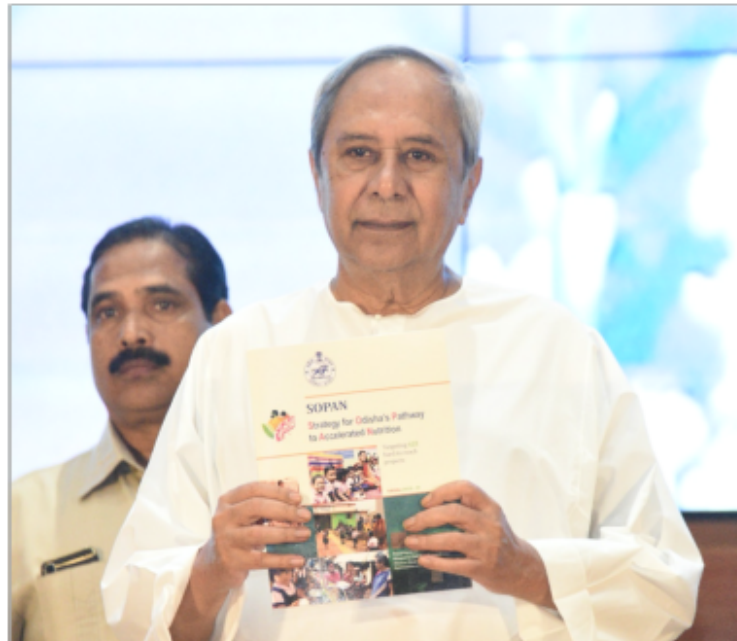
- In this program, we promote production and consumption of nutrient rich small fish for example Mola farmed in freshwater tanks and Anchovies caught from Ocean.
- Fish is an integral part of food system of 45 million people in Odisha. However, In 34% children below 6 years are malnourished.
- Government has Supplementary Nutrition Program supporting 12 million vulnerable people with hot cooked meals and take home rations (School Children, Children below 6, Pregnant and Lactating Women, Adolescent Girls).
- Odisha has vast aquatic food resources and strong demand for fish. The sector provides opportunity to women to generate income and for nutritional gains.
- In 2016, Odisha Government has signed 6-year technical collaboration agreement with WorldFish for introducing and scaling nutrition-sensitive aquatic food system technologies.



Government introduced and scaled 2 major game-changers

1. Nutrition-sensitive fish production systems i.e., Carp-mola fish farming system in inland tanks & production of hygienic and safe solar dried fish in coastal villages
2. Inclusion of Fish in Hot Cooked Meals and Take Home Rations in State Childcare Centers

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha released the 5-year State Nutrition Strategy SOPAN 2020-2025 which stresses Inclusion of Fish



- Inside the Government, scaling was possible due to Inter-departmental convergence programs by involvement of 5 line Departments and through
 - Policy changes
 - Promotion of New Schemes
- 60,000 Women started nutrition-sensitive carp-mola aquaculture in village public tanks (Gram Panchayat tanks) in last 3 years
- 10,000 households started carp-mola polyculture in private backyard / farm ponds
- 1,500 Women enrolled for production of hygienic solar dried marine fish
- Government included of fish in State Nutrition Strategy & Pilot fish in lunch meals 50 childcare centers

Lessons learned and way forward

- Bridging Science & State Bureaucracy can bring sustained impacts at scale.
- Inter-departmental Convergence has led to leveraging of resources for quick and wide scaling.
- Integration of the WorldFish project with Government Departments has led to quick and effective influence on the Government policies and schemes.
- Use of external funding support from USAID for demonstration and piloting of relevant and locally acceptable technologies has built confidence in Government and unlocked the huge strength of Government for scaling.
- Partnership with National ICAR research institutes and Private sector companies has helped to quickly develop the age-specific fish based products & design large scale delivery mechanisms.



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