



Bridging the Last Mile Transition for Natural Farming Adoption

The case for considering mainstreaming of the “one-acre model” in encouraging first trials of natural farming among smallholder farmers from climate vulnerable communities

September 2026



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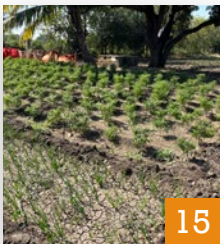


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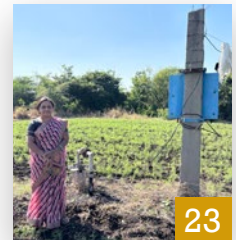


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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations used in the Report	Full Form
BRC	Bio-Input Resource Centre
CRP	Community Resource Person
FPC	Farmer Producer Company
FPO	Farmer Producer Organisation
KVK	Krishi Vigyan Kendra
MGNREGA	MahatmaGandhiNationalRuralEmploymentGuaranteeAct
MIS	Management Information System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMNF	National Mission on Natural Farming
NRLM	National Rural Livelihoods Mission
ReW	Re-emerging World
SAREP	South Asia Regional Energy Partnership
SHG	Self Help Groups
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSP	Swayam Shikshan Prayog
WCRF	Women-led Climate Resilient Farming

Foreword

Across India, small and marginal farmers are increasingly facing the consequences of climate variability, rising input costs, and declining soil health. In this context, the Government of India's launch of the National Mission on Natural Farming marks an important step toward building more resilient and sustainable farming systems. The Mission signals a strong national commitment to restoring soil health, reducing chemical dependency, and supporting farmers to adopt more climate-resilient agricultural practices.

Over the past decade, Swayam Shikshan Prayog has worked closely with women farmers across rural India through its Women-led Climate Resilient Farming programme. Our experience has shown that while many farmers are interested in natural farming, the transition requires practical pathways that allow them to experiment, learn, and build confidence over time. The One-Acre Model has emerged from this journey as a simple yet powerful approach that enables women farmers to begin natural farming on small plots, gradually expand practices, and strengthen both household nutrition and farm resilience.

This report brings together insights from SSP's field experience and recent pilots beyond Maharashtra to explore how such transition pathways can complement the implementation of NMNF. We hope these insights contribute constructively to the ongoing national effort to make natural farming accessible and viable for millions of smallholder farmers across India.

Ms. Naseem Shaikh

Chief Executive Officer
Swayam Shikshan Prayog

Executive Summary



India's launch of the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) in November 2024 marked a decisive and timely shift in national agricultural policy. At a moment when rising input costs, climate volatility, soil degradation, and farmer indebtedness are converging, the Mission provides a much-needed framework to reduce chemical dependence, restore agro-ecological balance, and improve farm sustainability at scale. By setting ambitious targets¹ for farmer coverage and area under natural farming, NMNF signals strong political and institutional intent to reorient India's food system toward resilience.

However, as NMNF transitions from policy announcement to on-ground implementation, we can anticipate that the success of the Mission will depend not only on coverage, but also on the quality of transition it enables. For millions of small and marginal farmers—particularly those deeply locked into chemical-intensive farming systems—the challenge is not a lack of interest in natural farming, but the absence of credible, low-risk pathways to begin. Fear of yield loss, short-term income uncertainty, labour concerns, limited access to natural inputs, and the lack of sustained handholding continue to inhibit adoption, even where awareness exists. Without addressing this “last-mile transition gap,” there is a risk that NMNF's uptake may stall or remain confined to better-resourced farmers.



“I was worried that after investing in bio-inputs and trying natural farming, the crops might fail and we would not get yield”

Mini Benni
Kothal, Kalpetta

This publication presents that natural farming is not a binary switch, but a multi-season transition process—one that requires confidence-building, experimentation, and iterative learning. Drawing on over a decade of field experience and new evidence from two pilot states, it presents the Women-Led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF) Model (also called the One-Acre model due to its small-plot entry approach), designed and refined by SSP, as a proven transition pathway that can strengthen NMNF implementation. Rather than re-inventing a solution, the One-Acre Model complements the Mission by addressing the most critical last-mile questions: How do farmers start? How do they manage risk?

1. The Mission targets 7.5 lakh hectares through 15,000 clusters to facilitate 1 crore farmers adopt natural farming by March 2026; August 2025, Press Information Bureau Article; [Link](#)

How do they gradually transition, sustain, and scale adoption over time?

At the heart of this approach is a small-plot, women-led entry strategy. The One-Acre Model enables women farmers to secure cultivation rights over a small portion of family land—often half to one acre—and experiment with natural farming practices without ‘disturbing’ the main cash crop. On this plot, women practice mixed cropping of diverse local food crops using chemical-free, water-efficient methods, supported by trained community resource persons through repeated, season-long handholding. This design lowers perceived risk, delivers visible results quickly, and allows confidence to build organically—often leading to spillover of natural practices into larger landholdings and main crops—key to scale the transition on the whole farmland.

Evidence from Maharashtra, where the model has been incubated and scaled over the last ten years, demonstrates consistent outcomes across four dimensions: improved household-level food and nutrition security, reduced input costs and more stable farm economics, enhanced soil health and agro-biodiversity, and strengthened women’s agency in farm-level decision-making. Women are not positioned as beneficiaries, but as system enablers: early adopters who catalyse behavioural change within households and communities. As male family members observe results on the one-acre plot, resistance diminishes and collective buy-in grows.

Importantly, early pilots outside Maharashtra in Karnataka (Bidar district) and Kerala (Wayanad district) indicate that the model’s core principles remain relevant across diverse agro-climatic and socio-economic contexts. While crop choices, landholding patterns, and institutional partnerships vary, the fundamentals—starting small, sequencing adoption, sustained handholding, and women-led

experimentation—remain constant. In both geographies, the model has helped overcome initial hesitation, particularly among chemical-intensive farmers, and has shown promise as an entry pathway even where NMNF structures are still nascent.

Early insights from the field point to several implementation considerations that NMNF may need to address as the Mission matures and scales. Given the Mission’s recent launch, current efforts are understandably focused on awareness creation and initial coverage. As implementation deepens, there is an opportunity to strengthen mechanisms for sustained follow-up, outcome tracking, and risk management across multiple cropping seasons—elements that are critical for supporting farmers through the transition phase. Similarly, frontline cadres such as Krishi Sakhis are well positioned to play a more active role as transition facilitators, should their mandates evolve beyond awareness toward adoption support. Finally, early experience suggests that further attention to enabling women’s participation—beyond formal land ownership—could help unlock NMNF’s full potential, given women’s central role in agricultural decision-making and household-level transitions.

Based on these insights, the publication advances seven policy recommendations to integrate transition quality into NMNF implementation.

Taken together, these recommendations highlight how the One-Acre Model can complement NMNF’s implementation architecture by offering a practical transition pathway for smallholder farmers. As the Mission moves from initial rollout toward wider on-ground adoption, such approaches can help translate policy intent into sustained practice—particularly for farmers navigating risk, uncertainty, and resource constraints. Integrating these pathways can strengthen NMNF’s ability to support meaningful, durable transitions to natural farming at scale.

Exhibit 1

Policy Integration Matrix: Embedding the WCRF Transition Pathway within the NMNF Framework for smallholder farmers

What are the opportunities to augment NMNF Policy Design to enable and monitor transition towards natural farming?

- 1** Institutionalize phased transition pathways within NMNF that allow farmers to start small, learn, and expand gradually – as risk-mitigated entry mechanism for small and marginal farmers

Introduce staged adoption tracks to adopt NMNF – nutrition gardens -> micro-pilots -> whole farm adoption

Recognize and support small plot pilots as valid NMNF participation units, not just whole farm adoption

Mandate multi-season transition support (3–4 crop cycles) instead of one-time enrolment

- 2** Complement the current outreach metrics (farmer enrolment, hectares covered etc.) with indicators that track quality and depth of transition

Introduce transition quality indicators (crop diversification incl. local food crops, soil health improvements etc.)

Communicate the value proposition of NMNF to farmers around reduced cost of cultivation, improved quality of yield, food security

Orient internal M&E reporting systems to track and measure success against outcomes



How to operationalize the phased transition towards natural farming?

- 3** Expand the role of Krishi Sakhis from awareness agents to transition facilitators

Orient Krishi Sakhis to achieve outcomes – farmers transitioned, plots converted, cycles completed etc.

Support Krishi Sakhis to develop demonstration plots themselves – which can make knowledge dissemination effective

Build advisory, handholding and persuasion skills into Sakhi training, beyond technical NF content

Relook at the Krishi Sakhi and Farmer ratio and calibrate for effectiveness

- 4** Position Women as the primary entry point for NMNF adoption irrespective of formal land ownership status

Develop nutrition-first and household level entry pathways led by women

Recognise women cultivators with or without land titles as legitimate NMNF participants

- 5** Decentralize the access to information, knowledge and natural inputs at the village / panchayat levels

Provide starter input support (seeds, bio-pesticides, vermicompost etc.) for first-time adopters during initial transition cycles

Establish women-led enterprises which can become knowledge, input, and advisory hub for natural farming

- 6** Identify and proactively address transition key risks which can stall the progress towards natural farming

Provide crop insurance add-ons, contingency grants, or input support during the first 2–3 seasons when uncertainty and vulnerability are highest

Integrate responses to water scarcity, wildlife damage, labour availability, and climate shocks into NMNF design through convergence and local planning

Create mechanisms for Krishi Sakhis, CRPs, and district teams to flag emerging risks in real time and trigger adaptive responses

- 7** Harmonize the interventions of complementary departments to deliver NMNF effectively on the ground

Formalise coordination among Agriculture, NRLM, KVK, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, and MGNREGA with clear role definitions and joint review mechanisms

Synchronise subsidies (irrigation, livestock, compost units), training calendars, and eligibility norms to support farmers through the full transition cycle

Use NRLM structures (SHGs, FPOs, Krishi/Pashu Sakhis) as delivery channels for NMNF inputs, training, and follow-up—moving beyond department-led trainings



India's launch of the **National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)** in November 2024 marks a significant policy commitment toward transforming agricultural practices at scale. By foregrounding soil health, reduced chemical dependency, and farmer resilience, the Mission signals a strategic shift in how agricultural productivity and sustainability are being re-imagined in the face of climate stress.

This shift comes at a critical moment. Indian agriculture today supports nearly half of the country's workforce, yet small and marginal farmers—who constitute over 86%² of all farm holdings—continue to face rising input costs, soil degradation, and climate variability. As a result, improving farm sustainability is not only an environmental imperative but also an economic and social one.

While NMNF establishes the institutional architecture for this transformation, the success of the Mission will ultimately depend on how farmers transition into natural farming practices—particularly those who are smallholders, resource-constrained, and highly risk-averse.

Early field insights suggest that the challenge may not lie in farmer interest, but in enabling practical and confidence-building pathways for transition. This chapter examines why the last-mile transition—from

chemical-intensive practices to natural farming—may emerge as a key implementation bottleneck as NMNF scales nationally.

NMNF establishes a strong national intent for agro-ecological transition, but its success will depend on how farmers are supported through change

NMNF provides a strong national framework to mainstream natural farming through structured guidelines, institutional roles, and budgetary commitments. The Mission emphasises capacity building, formation of farmer clusters, promotion of bio-inputs, and engagement of frontline extension systems such as Krishi Sakhis, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), and agriculture departments.

Importantly, the Mission reflects a growing recognition that India's input-intensive agricultural model is increasingly under strain. Over the past several decades, rising dependence on chemical fertilisers and pesticides has helped boost crop productivity, but it has also contributed to declining soil health, increasing cultivation costs, and heightened farmer vulnerability to climate shocks.

2. Livelihood of Farmers, Press Bureau of India (PBI), 2023, [Link](#)

Natural farming is therefore positioned not merely as an alternative practice, but as a pathway toward restoring ecological balance while improving the long-term resilience of smallholder farming systems.

In this sense, NMNF establishes an enabling policy

environment. However, translating this enabling framework into sustained adoption on individual farms requires navigating a set of behavioural, agronomic, and institutional realities that shape how farmers make decisions on the ground.

Exhibit 2 NMNF Commitments in Numbers³

The mission targets to convert

7.5 Lakh Hectares

of land under natural farming across 15,000 Clusters



The mission will set up

10,000 Bio-Resource Centres

to facilitate access to natural inputs



The mission aims to mobilize

1 crore Farmers

in adopting natural farming



70,000 Krishi-Sakhis

will be trained to ensure last-mile input delivery and farmer guidance



Farmer adoption is likely to stall not due to lack of interest, but due to unresolved fears around transition risks

Evidence from multiple states indicates that farmer hesitation toward natural farming is often driven not by resistance to change, but by concerns around transition risks. For small and marginal farmers, whose livelihoods depend on one or two seasonal crops, even a single failed harvest can have severe economic consequences.

As a result, farmers tend to prioritise short-term yield certainty over long-term sustainability benefits. Even when they recognise the rising costs associated with chemical inputs, the perceived risks of experimenting with new practices remain high.

NMNF's current emphasis on training and awareness creation plays an important role in introducing farmers to natural farming practices. However, awareness alone rarely addresses the practical questions farmers face when considering transition: Where do I start? What happens if yields fall? What bio-inputs are needed, and at what stage? How are they prepared? Who supports me if something goes wrong?

Without mechanisms that address these concerns through demonstration, handholding, and phased transition, adoption may slow after initial exposure.



Only 4%

of farmers in India practice Sustainable Agricultural Practices and Systems (SAPs)⁴

"Initial trainings help farmers understand the principles of natural farming, but sustained handholding during the first few crop cycles often helps them overcome hesitation and apply the practices with confidence."

Community Resource Person, SSP
Bidar district, Karnataka

3. National Mission on Natural Farming: Back to Roots, Forward with Sustainability, Press Bureau of India (PBI), 2025, [Link](#)

4. Page 21, Sustainable Agriculture in India 2021: What We Know and How to Scale Up, CEEW, [Link](#)

Decades of dependence on chemical inputs have created a psychological and agronomic lock-in among smallholders

Over the past several decades, chemical inputs have become deeply embedded within India's agricultural production systems. For many farmers, fertilisers and pesticides represent familiar and predictable tools that offer short-term yield stability. This has created a form of chemical lock-in, where farmers continue input-intensive practices even when they recognise the long-term ecological and economic downsides.

Research suggests that decades of intensive input use have contributed to widespread soil nutrient imbalances and declining organic matter in many

India remains the second-largest consumer and third-largest producer of Chemical Fertilizers globally⁵

farming regions. As soil health deteriorates, farmers often respond by increasing chemical input usage further, reinforcing this cycle of dependency.

For farmers already facing financial pressures, shifting away from these established practices can appear risky. Natural farming, which relies on locally prepared inputs and ecological processes, requires farmers to learn new techniques and trust biological systems that may take time to stabilise.

Without low-risk entry points that allow farmers to experiment on small plots, many farmers remain reluctant to move away from familiar chemical-based systems.



30%⁶

of the 146.8 million Ha Soil in India is degraded, as per National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning

Perceived risks related to yield uncertainty, labour intensity, and climate variability discourage experimentation

Beyond yield concerns, farmers often associate natural farming with higher labour requirements during the initial transition cycles. Preparing bio-inputs, managing diversified cropping systems, and monitoring crop health demand time and attention—particularly during the early stages of learning.

In many rural households, labour availability is already constrained due to migration, off-farm employment, and caregiving responsibilities. These factors make farmers cautious about adopting practices that appear labour-intensive without guaranteed short-term returns.

Climate variability further amplifies this uncertainty. Erratic rainfall, pest outbreaks, and extreme weather events have made farming increasingly unpredictable across many regions of India. Under such conditions, farmers often prefer familiar input-based practices that offer perceived yield stability.

Without mechanisms that allow farmers to experiment gradually and build confidence over multiple crop cycles, natural farming can appear aspirational rather than actionable.



"When we learnt about natural farming methods, our first concern was how could we retain the yield and manage pests without using urea and pesticides."

Sunita Biradar
WCRF Adopter Farmer,
Bidar district, Karnataka

Training-only and coverage-first approaches are insufficient for a transition that unfolds across seasons

These realities expose the limitations of conventional extension approaches that prioritise one-time trainings and hectare-based targets, assuming that knowledge dissemination will automatically translate into adoption. Evidence from the field suggests otherwise. Transition to natural farming is a process, not an event, and requires repeated engagement across seasons.

Training-only models rarely account for the iterative learning farmers need as they experiment, make mistakes, adjust practices, and build confidence. Similarly, coverage-first targets can inadvertently push farmers to adopt at scales they are not ready for, increasing perceived risk and reinforcing scepticism when outcomes fall short. What is often missing is a graduated pathway—one that allows farmers to start small, learn safely, and expand organically.

5. Amrit Kaal: Empowering India's Farmers Through Strategic Fertilizer Policy, Press Bureau of India (PIB), 2025, [Link](#)

6 Soil degradation crisis is impacting your health, All Indians Matter, 2024, [Link](#)

Case in Point

Bhagyashree Kalappa Kusnure is a trained Krishi Sakhi from Diggi Panchayat of Bidar District, but, currently lacks the clarity and orientation on easing the transition for farmers natural farming practices



Bhagyashree Kalappa Kusnure, a trained Krishi Sakhi from Diggi Panchayat in Bidar district, illustrates the important role frontline community cadres can play in promoting natural farming. Bhagyashree has received multiple trainings on natural farming practices, including an eight-day training earlier and a recent five-day refresher covering bio-inputs such as Jeevamrut and Dashparni. She regularly conducts awareness sessions with farmers and reports her outreach activities to the block-level NRLM team and the Raitha Sampark Kendra.

However, as she explains, farmers often seek more practical guidance on how to begin the transition on their own fields—such as preparing inputs, managing crops during early cycles, and addressing initial uncertainties. Strengthening the orientation of Krishi Sakhis around these transition steps, along with structured follow-ups with farmers, could further enhance their effectiveness in supporting the adoption of natural farming practices at the village level.

Women's central role in farming makes them natural transition leaders, yet current designs often exclude them

Women play a central role in India's agricultural systems—particularly in food crop cultivation, seed preservation, and household nutrition management. Despite this, their role in formal agricultural transition strategies remains under-recognised.

In many regions, women actively manage kitchen gardens, food crops, and post-harvest plots—spaces that are particularly well suited for experimenting with natural farming practices. These spaces allow households to test ecological farming methods without disrupting primary cash crops.



Only 13%⁷

Women who are engaged in agriculture has access to land titles – restricting their access to agri-finance services, government schemes and programs

However, women's participation in agricultural schemes is often constrained by land ownership norms, as many women farmers do not hold formal land titles despite contributing significantly to farming operations.

Recognising women not merely as beneficiaries but as system enablers of agricultural transition can therefore play a critical role in accelerating natural farming adoption.

For NMNF to translate intent into adoption, transition pathways must complement coverage-driven implementation

As NMNF moves from policy rollout to implementation, the central challenge may not be reaching farmers, but supporting them through the transition journey.

Awareness, institutional alignment, and policy support are necessary foundations—but they are unlikely to translate into sustained adoption without practical pathways that help farmers manage the risks associated with change. For smallholder farmers, the decision to shift farming practices is shaped by livelihood security, labour availability, and the ability to experiment without jeopardising their primary income sources.

What is therefore required is not simply broader coverage of natural farming initiatives, but carefully designed transition mechanisms that allow farmers to start small, build confidence, and expand gradually.

The chapters that follow examine how the One-Acre Model, developed and refined by SSP, offers one such pathway—demonstrating how small-plot, women-led micro-pilots can bridge the gap between policy ambition and on-ground adoption.

7. Closing the Knowledge Gap for Women in Agriculture, Observer Research Foundation, 2025, [Link](#)

02

The WCRF Model

A Practical Transition Pathway for Smallholder Farmers Towards Natural Farming



India's National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) represents one of the largest public initiatives globally aimed at transitioning agriculture toward ecological farming systems. The Mission aims to reach 1 crore farmers across 7.5 lakh hectares through 15,000 clusters, supported by a budget outlay of ₹2,481 crore.

While the Mission establishes the institutional architecture for promoting natural farming—including training systems, community resource persons, and bio-input resource centres—the success of the initiative will depend on how farmers navigate the practical transition from chemical to natural farming practices. For small and marginal farmers, this transition involves risks related to yields, labour requirements, and uncertainty during the early cycles.

Over the last decade, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) has developed and refined a practical pathway that addresses these concerns through what is known as the Women-Led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF) Model [also called the One-Acre model due to its small-plot entry approach]. By enabling farmers—particularly women—to begin natural farming on a small, manageable plot of land, the model creates a low-risk environment for experimentation, learning, and confidence building. As farmers observe tangible results, practices gradually expand across larger portions of their landholding.

The One-Acre Model emerged from the need to enable safe experimentation among smallholder farmers

The One-Acre Model was designed and refined by SSP in the drought-prone districts of Marathwada, Maharashtra—regions characterised by small landholdings, high climate vulnerability, and deep dependence on chemical inputs. In these contexts, farmers were acutely aware of the limitations of chemical farming but lacked viable pathways to shift practices without jeopardising their livelihoods.

Rather than encouraging a 'whole farm conversion', SSP's approach was grounded in a simple insight: farmers need a space to experiment without fear. The model therefore enables women farmers to secure cultivation rights from their families over a small portion of family land, typically half to one acre. This plot becomes a learning laboratory where natural farming practices like application of natural home-prepared seeds, bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides, natural growth stimulators, mixed cropping with local food crops, etc. can be tested, observed, and refined before any decision to scale.

By design, the model does not disrupt the main cash crop. This sequencing is critical: it lowers perceived risk, reduces resistance from male family members, and allows learning to take place alongside continued income security.

Let us break down the design principles of the model, operationalizing the gradual behavioural change needed for effective transition, the institutional framework followed to make it happen, and most importantly – the positioning of women to initiate the transition towards natural farming.

Design principles that make the One-Acre Model an effective transition pathway

At its core, the One-Acre Model is built around a set of interlinked design principles that directly address the barriers outlined in Chapter 1.

First, start small, learn fast, gain confidence, and scale gradually. Farmers begin with manageable micro-pilots and progressively expand only after observing results across seasons. Farmers can assess risks and build their confidence organically through this phased approach, which directly addresses their hesitations that surface during the chemical-to-natural farming transition.

Second, diversification over monocropping. On the one-acre plot, women cultivate 6 to 8 local food crops per season through mixed cropping with vegetables, pulses, millets, and cereals using water-efficient, chemical-free practices. This diversification reduces risks of crop failure, stabilises nutritious food supply for the family, and ensures early, visible returns.

Third, women as the early adopters within the community. The model taps into the key farm practice insight: men are driven by income growth and decide to grow high-value cash crops, while women are concerned about the family's health, nutrition, and overall well-being. The model chooses to develop women as the natural farming system initiators within the family with 'food and nutrition security' as a key value proposition. Women then leads the micro-experiments, demonstrates results, and encourages the family to expand the practices.

Fourth, practice-first learning. Instead of abstract ad-hoc trainings, farmers learn by doing—preparing bio-inputs, observing soil response, managing pests naturally, and adjusting practices in real time.

Together, these principles transform natural farming from a distant concept into an actionable practice.

Beyond these design principles lie a gradual but steady behaviour change process which propel the transition

One of the most significant contributions of the One-Acre Model lies in its ability to shift farmer behaviour.

Transition to natural farming is as much a psychological process as a technical one. Farmers' confidence grows not through instruction alone, but through sustained handholding and follow-ups over 3 to 4 agri-cultural cycles in addition to the visible results.

Early cycles often deliver tangible benefits: reduced expenditure on chemical inputs, improved taste and shelf life of produce, better household health and nutritional status, and incremental soil recovery. These outcomes are immediately observable within the household and community, creating positive feedback loops.

Importantly, success on the one-acre plot often leads to spillover effects. Natural inputs begin to be used on main crops; diversified practices extend to larger areas; neighbours observe and enquire. Over time, the transition moves from an individual experiment to a community-level norm.

The institutional architecture enables sustained handholding beyond awareness – key in driving the behaviour change

Unlike conventional extension models that rely on one-time trainings, the One-Acre Model is anchored in continuous, localised handholding. Trained Community Resource Persons (CRPs)—often women from the same or neighbouring villages—support farmers through repeated visits, demonstrations, and troubleshooting across seasons.

This institutional layer translates NMNF's objectives into locally relevant practice. CRPs function as interpreters, mentors, and confidence-builders, ensuring that farmers are not left alone during the most vulnerable stages of transition.

Farmer field schools, exposure visits, and peer learning forums further reinforce learning and collective confidence. Together, these mechanisms address the "how to start, how to sustain, how to scale" questions that farmers consistently raise.

Women are central as system enablers, not beneficiaries

Women farmers play a critical but often under-recognised role in India's agricultural systems. In many rural households, women are responsible for cultivating food crops, managing livestock, preserving seeds, and ensuring household nutrition. These responsibilities position them uniquely to lead the early stages of transition toward natural farming.

The One-Acre Model leverages this reality by encouraging women farmers to secure cultivation rights over a small plot of family land—typically around one acre. This arrangement allows women to experiment with diversified cropping systems while maintaining household food security.

The results have been particularly significant in terms of **household nutrition, food diversity, and women's decision-making agency**. By cultivating multiple food crops within the same plot, families gain access to vegetables, pulses, and cereals that were previously purchased from markets. This not only reduces household expenditure but also improves dietary diversity.



“My husband and I started with only 0.25 acres. Our confidence increased a lot after we saw the results, and we expanded the model on the whole land. Now, women from neighbouring families ask me to teach them about the methods.”

Sangita Thite
Dharashiv district,
Maharashtra

Equally important, the model gradually strengthens women's voice in agricultural decision-making. As women farmers demonstrate successful outcomes on their plots, their confidence grows and their influence in farm management decisions expands.

For programmes such as NMNF, which seek to promote natural farming at scale—recognising women not only as beneficiaries but as **system enablers of agricultural transition**—can significantly accelerate adoption.

The One-Acre Model complements NMNF by addressing the transition gap

Viewed through the lens of NMNF implementation, the One-Acre Model offers a missing middle layer between awareness creation and large-scale adoption. While NMNF provides the policy framework and institutional mandate, the One-Acre Model operationalises transition at the household and community level.

It does not replace NMNF's cluster approach or coverage goals. Instead, it complements them by offering a structured on-ramp, particularly for farmers who are hesitant, resource-poor, or excluded by conventional eligibility norms.

In this sense, the One-Acre Model helps NMNF answer its most pressing last-mile question: how can farmers be supported to begin, persist, and expand natural farming practices with confidence?

While the design of the One-Acre Model offers a compelling transition pathway, its relevance ultimately depends on the outcomes it delivers for farmers. The following chapter examines the evidence emerging from SSP's programmes on how the model impacts farm economics, household nutrition, and ecological resilience.

03

Impact Evidence

Evidence that the Transition Pathway Works



Evidence from over a decade of implementation in Maharashtra, complemented by early learnings from pilot geographies such as Bidar and Wayanad, indicates that the One-Acre Model delivers impact not through isolated outcomes, but through a sequenced process of change. Rather than expecting farmers to make an abrupt shift away from chemical farming, the model enables a gradual transition in which confidence, capability, and conviction are built over time. The impacts become interconnected stages in a transition pathway—one that begins with household-level security and culminates in sustained, farmer-led adoption of natural farming practices.

Household food security becomes the first anchor for transition

The earliest and most consistently observed impact of the One-Acre Model emerges at the household level, particularly in relation to food security and nutrition. By design, the model prioritises cultivation of diverse food crops—vegetables, pulses, millets, and cereals—rather than cash crops alone. For many smallholder families, this marks a departure from monocropping systems that rely heavily on market purchases for daily food needs.

Across geographies, women farmers report that the first tangible benefit of adopting the model is improved access to fresh, diverse, and chemical-free food for their families. This shift has immediate effects: reduced dependence on markets, lower household

expenditure on food, and greater dietary diversity. In Maharashtra, families returned to traditional food combinations after adopting the model that had gradually disappeared under commercial cropping pressures.

Crucially, this improvement in household food security reduces the perceived risk of experimentation. When families are assured that at least a portion of their food needs will be met from their own land, the fear of “losing everything” in a failed season diminishes. This sense of security becomes the foundation upon which further experimentation is possible.



“Now I grow vegetables on my land, so I depend less on market food and always have fresh vegetables.”

Shanta Raja,
Wayanad District,
Kerala



18.64%

Average increase in food crop productivity among WCRF adopter families

The reduced cost of cultivation further strengthens the stickiness towards the model

As households begin to stabilise their food needs, farmers’ attention shifts to the economics of cultivation. One of the strongest drivers of confidence in the One-Acre Model is the visible reduction in input costs. By replacing purchased chemical fertilisers and pesticides with locally prepared bio-inputs—often using farm waste and livestock dung—farmers significantly lower their cash outflows.

Evidence from Maharashtra shows that even when gross yields from the transition plot are comparable to chemical farming, net incomes often improve due to reduced expenditure. In pilot geographies, early adopters reported savings from not purchasing fertilisers, pesticides, and seeds, alongside reduced medical expenses linked to improved household health.

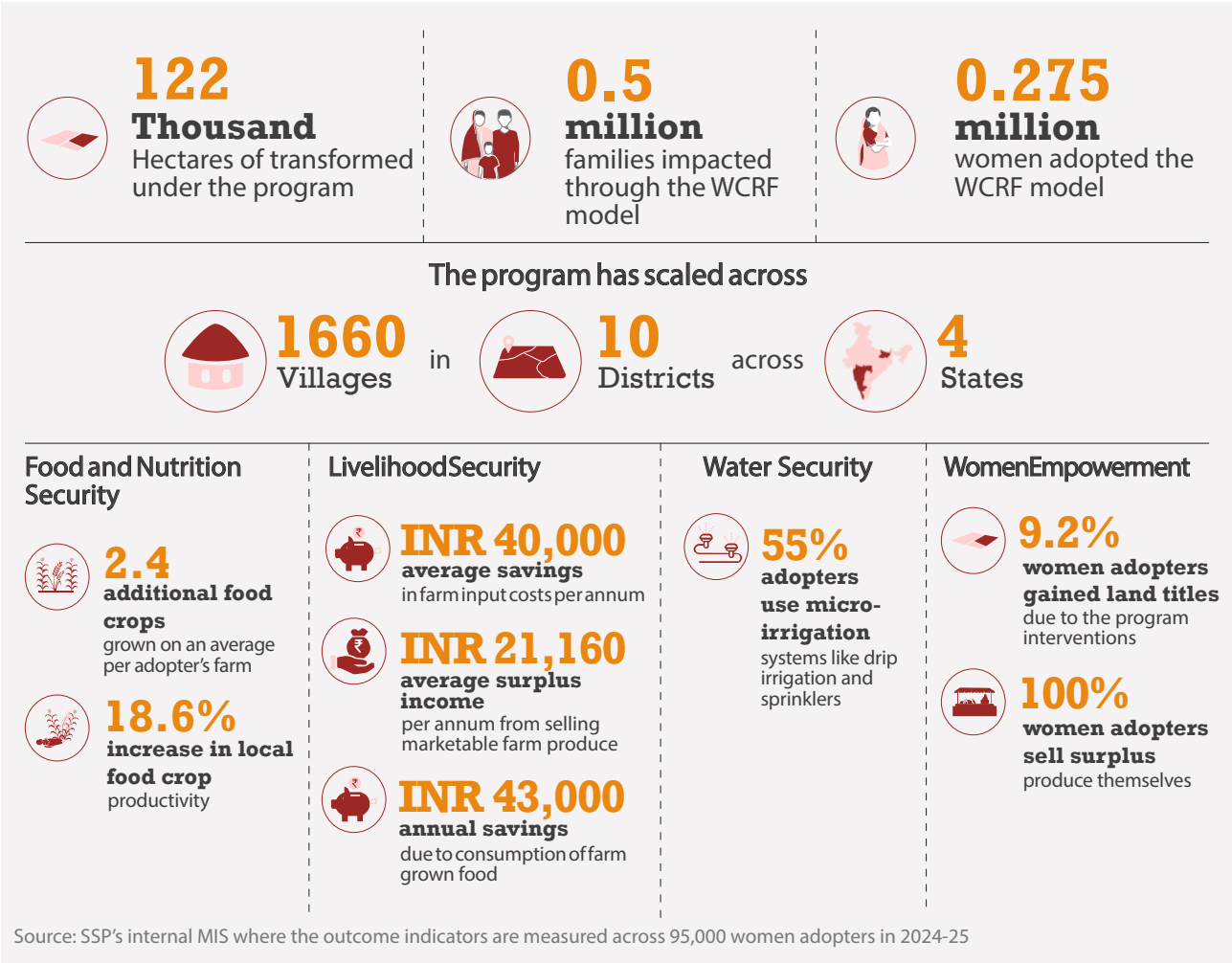


INR 40,000

Average savings on farm input cost per annum among WCRF adopter families

This reduction in financial pressure plays a critical role in sustaining adoption. Smallholders, particularly those dependent on one or two seasonal crops, are highly sensitive to input costs and debt cycles. The One-Acre Model does not promise immediate yield maximisation; instead, it offers predictability and cost control. Over time, this economic breathing room allows farmers to absorb minor yield fluctuations without abandoning the transition.

Exhibit 3
The impacts delivered by the WCRF Model



Ecological improvements reinforce farmer confidence in the model and supports long-term behaviour change

As farmers continue practicing natural methods over successive seasons, ecological changes begin to reinforce behavioural change. Improvements in soil texture, moisture retention, and biological activity are among the most frequently reported outcomes. Farmers describe soils becoming more friable, crops exhibiting stronger resistance to pests, and fields recovering more quickly after extreme weather events.

These ecological signals serve as validation for farmers who were initially sceptical. Unlike abstract training messages, visible changes in soil and crop health provide tangible proof that natural practices are working. In Maharashtra, long-term adopters attribute increased resilience to drought and erratic rainfall to gradual soil regeneration. In Bidar, early spillovers—such as using vermicompost or bio-inputs on main crops—indicate growing trust in natural methods beyond the original transition plot.



“After starting farming using the improved practices, the soil has become more clayey as compared to before, which helps the water to seep quickly.”

Shivalila Patil
Bidar district
Karnataka



“When I started out with the model, the elders in the village said that I was making a mistake. Today the people who once made fun of me, ask me to teach them. WCRF has helped me gain an identity in the community as an example for many women to follow natural farming.”

Suvarna Shinde
Dharashiv district,
Maharashtra

Importantly, these ecological outcomes are cumulative rather than instantaneous. The model's emphasis on repeated cycles, observation, and adjustment aligns with the slow but steady nature of soil regeneration, helping farmers recalibrate expectations away from short-term gains toward long-term resilience.

Improved women's agency in farming not only sustains the model, but enables scaled adoption within the family-owned land

At the centre of this transition process are women farmers. By encouraging women to secure cultivation rights over a defined plot of land, the One-Acre Model creates a space for autonomous decision-making.

Women lead choices around crop selection, input preparation, consumption, and sale—often for the first time.

This agency has two critical implications. First, women tend to prioritise food crops, nutrition, and cost efficiency, aligning closely with the objectives of natural farming. Second, women's consistent presence on the farm enables close monitoring and timely application of practices, which is essential during the early stages of transition.

Field evidence suggests that once women demonstrate success on the transition plot, male family members become more receptive to expanding natural practices to other parts of the farm. In several cases, husbands who were initially hesitant began adopting bio-inputs or reducing chemical use on cash crops after observing outcomes on the women-managed plot. In this way, women act not merely as beneficiaries, but as system enablers of change within the household.

Spillover and expansion signal readiness for scale

The ultimate test of any transition model is whether adoption sustains beyond the initial intervention. Across Maharashtra, the One-Acre Model has consistently demonstrated voluntary expansion—both in terms of acreage and practices. Farmers who begin with a small plot often scale to larger areas over time, incorporating natural methods into main crops such as sugarcane, cotton, or pulses.

Early signs of similar behaviour are visible in new pilot geographies. Farmers who initially limited natural practices to vegetables or kitchen gardens have begun applying bio-inputs to staple crops, experimenting cautiously but confidently. These spillovers indicate

that the transition has moved beyond compliance to conviction.

Such expansion is not driven by external incentives alone, but by accumulated experience. Having witnessed improvements in food security, reduced costs, and soil health, farmers perceive natural farming not as an imposed alternative, but as a viable and desirable system.

Taken together, these layered impacts explain why the One-Acre Model has proven effective across contexts. By sequencing change—starting with household security, moving through economic stabilisation, reinforcing ecological outcomes, and centring women's

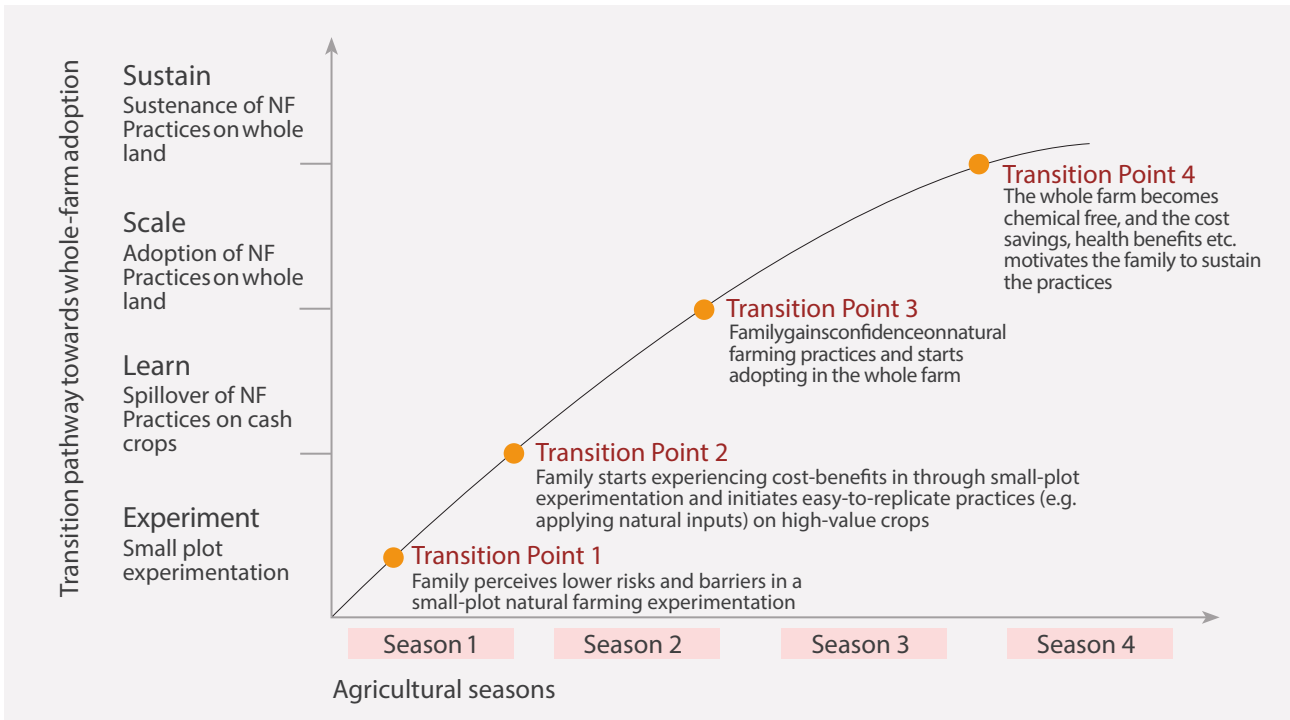
agency—the model addresses the very fears and uncertainties that often stall adoption.

For NMNF, these insights underscore a critical lesson: adoption is not constrained by lack of interest, but by lack of transition support. The One-Acre Model demonstrates how a low-risk, farmer-centred pathway can convert intent into sustained practice. As the next chapter explores, this logic holds even beyond Maharashtra, pointing to the model's adaptability across diverse agro-climatic and socio-economic contexts.

Exhibit 4

Ideal transition pathway towards whole-farm adoption of natural farming

Field evidence from SSP's programmes shows that farmers typically require three to four crop cycles to gain confidence in natural farming practices before expanding them across larger areas of cultivation



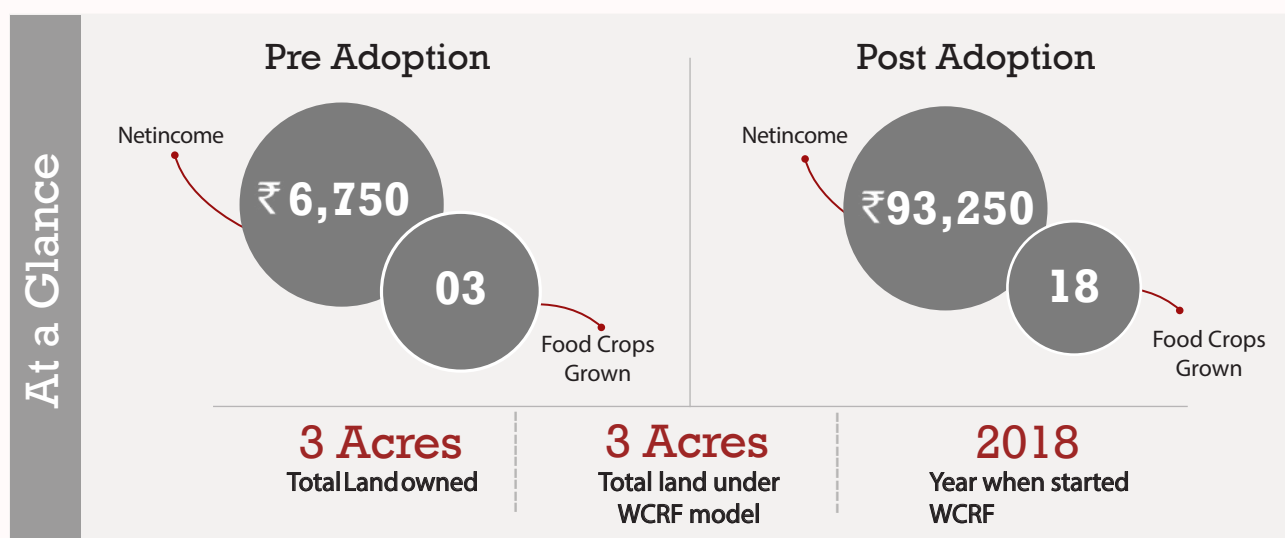
Success Story

“Before adopting WCRF, I had to worry about getting food for the family and now I can produce so much that I can sell the surplus in my village.”

From suffering with low productivity due to water scarcity to becoming the Sabzi Didi of her village, Sangita Thite thanks the WCRF model for her empowering journey

Before adopting the WCRF model, Sangita and her family struggled with low yields, water scarcity and weekly expenses on market vegetables. Their 3-acre farm grew mostly soybean and maize, leaving little food or income. After SSP's training in 2018, Sangita began natural farming on a small plot and gradually expanded to all 3 acres. With bio-pesticides, vermicompost, and improved irrigation support, her harvest diversified to nine vegetables and multiple food crops. Today, the family earns over INR 93,000 annually, no longer visits doctors frequently, and enjoys year-round food security. Sangita now sells surplus vegetables locally—proudly known as the village's Sabzi Didi.

Exhibit 5





INR 400-500 spent

every week on buying food
from market



Kharif 2018

WCRF Adoption



INR 4000 spent

every season on chemical
pesticides

How it all started

“We did not have complete knowledge about natural farming practices, even though we knew about its benefits”, recalls Sangita. The Thite family of Wadibamni village of Dharashiv have 3 acres of land which they have always used to grow Soybean in Kharif season and Wheat or Jowar in Rabi season. Conscious about the health of their cows, they had always used natural fertilisers but sprayed chemical pesticides on their land to manage pests.

Working with her husband Baliram on their land, Sangita was responsible for cutting grass, putting fertilisers and looking after their cows. They both took decisions on what crops to plant, but the finances were mostly looked after by her husband.

Monocropping and dependence on rainfed irrigation led to very low yield every season, with the family having to spend money to procure seeds and vegetables from the market. The children fell sick often and were required to be rushed to the nearby hospital for checkups. This left them in financial distress throughout the year.

Sangita learnt about the WCRF model from the CRP of her village and took part in the initial training. As she learnt about the practices of natural farming, she decided to try it out on her land to which her husband readily agreed.

The Transition

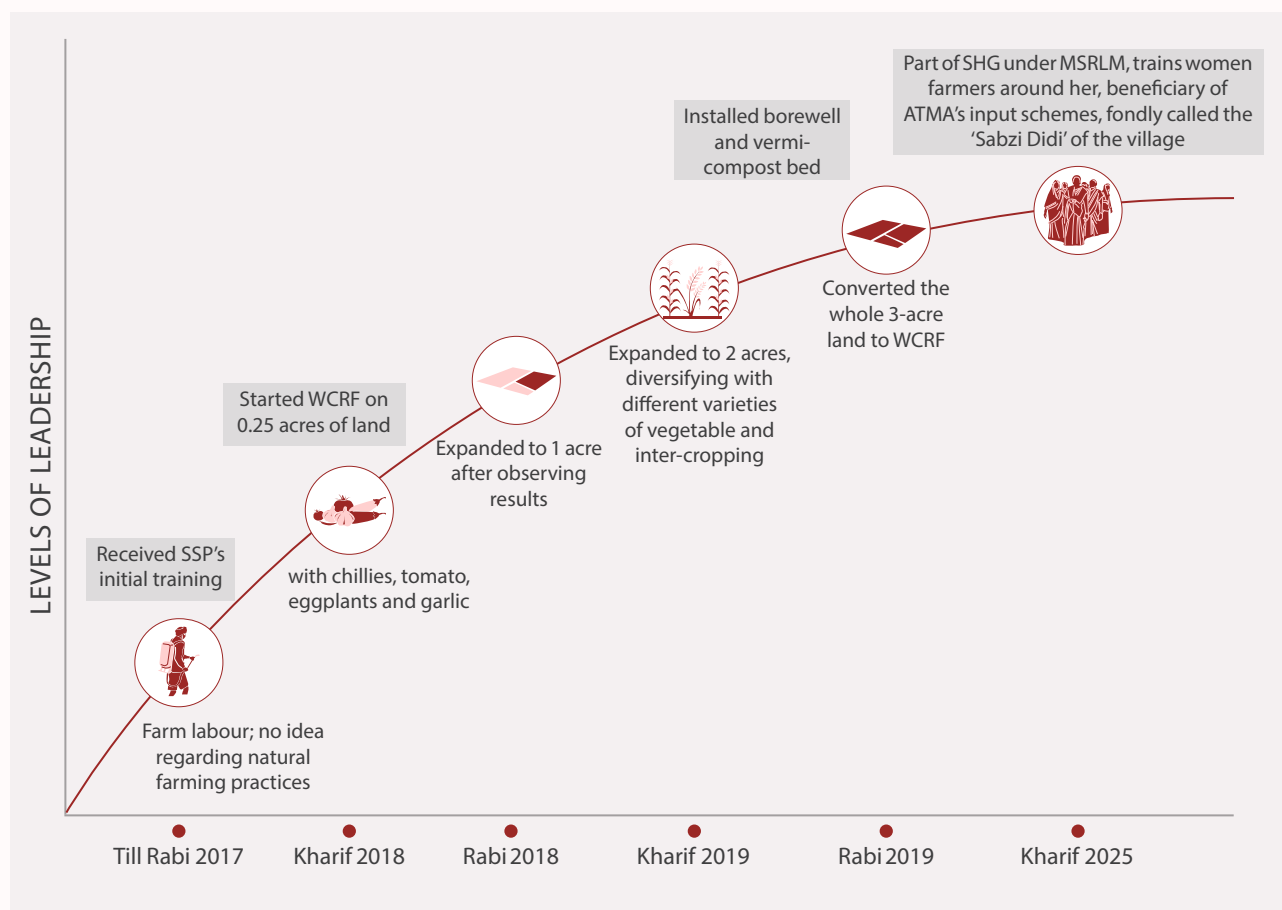
After the initial training from SSP in Kharif 2018, Sangita began natural farming on 10 guntas (0.25 acres) of her land, planting chillies, tomatoes, eggplants and garlic. Her husband supported her efforts fully. The next season she could only expand to 1 acre due to water scarcity. In Rabi season of 2019, with the installation of a borewell and a vermi-compost bed, she brought their whole 3-acre land under natural farming.

Since then, the Thite family has been dedicatedly growing food in their land with Sangita leading the effort. Last year, they managed to grow 9 varieties of vegetables along with Maize (makka), Sorghum (Jowar), Bengal Gram (Harbhara) and Groundnut for the family in their land – all through use of bio-pesticides and vermi-compost.

The shift in farm practices have empowered the family by reducing the costs on farm inputs and saving money on market bought food items. Sale of surplus have also allowed them to adopt 3 buffaloes. Through the linkage to ATMA with SSP's assistance, the family has also received drip pipes and sprinklers, which have reduced their irrigation worries.

Due to surplus vegetable production, Sangita had also started to sell them in her village, which has earned her the nickname of Sabzi Didi.

Exhibit 6 From distress to leadership – The Thite family’s inspiring transition story



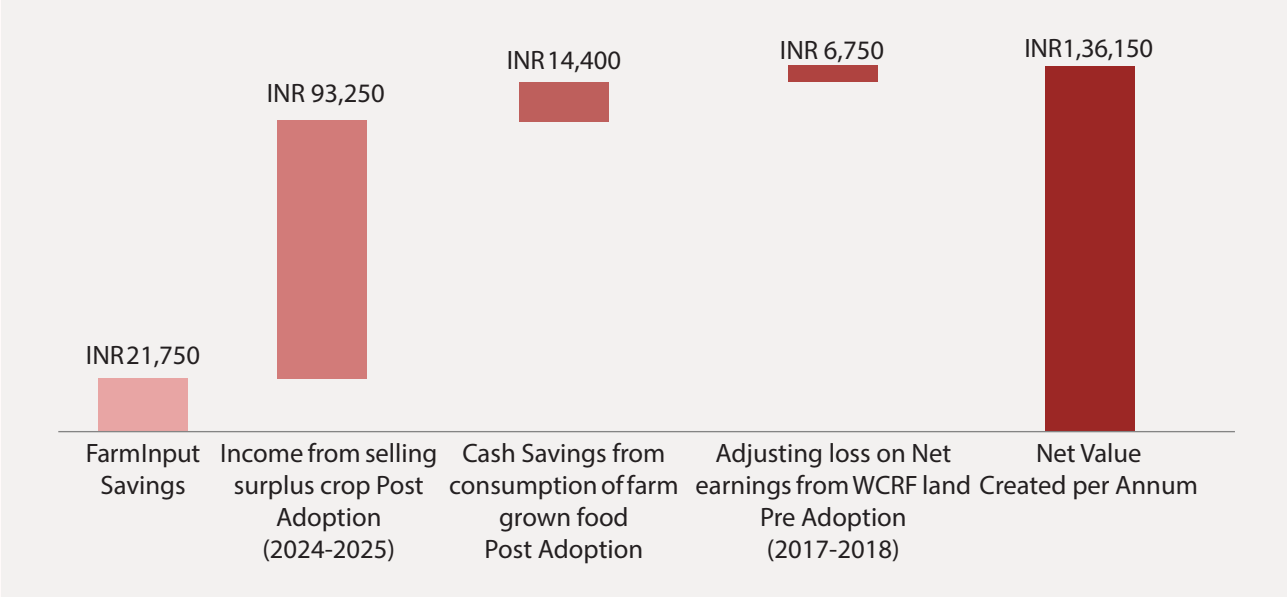
Key Results



INR 35,000 earned
in five months selling vegetables

- 1. Economic Viability of Farming-** Sangita and her husband have bounced back from their financial woes after adopting the model. Earlier, they had often sought money from local moneylenders to support the family but now they produce enough surplus capable to feed the entire village. Their 3-acres of land earned them around INR 93,250 last year. Apart from that, they have also diversified their earnings through the sale of milk from the 3 buffaloes they have adopted.
- 2. Food and Nutrition Security-** “We had to spend around INR 300 every week to buy vegetables from the market”, recounted Sangita as she beamed with pride looking at her lush green land filled with vegetables. The family also revealed that they haven’t visited any doctors in the past 5-6 years, thanks to consuming their own nutrient rich chemical-free produce.
- 3. Ecological Regeneration-** The use of vermi-compost during ploughing had increased the rate of water absorption on their land. Earlier, with the use of only cow dung and chemical pesticides, water stood on the land for longer periods, degrading the quality of the produce.
- 4. Women Empowerment-** Through the WCRF model, Sangita has transformed from a simple farm worker to the ‘Sabzi Didi’ of her village, training and inspiring other women farmers around her to take up natural farming. She has also become an active SHG member under Maharashtra’s rural livelihood mission (UMED) as well as one of the beneficiaries of ATMA’s bio-inputs scheme in her village. “SSP’s model has given me an identity which I never thought I might have”, she said.

Exhibit 7 Net Value Created per Annum after Adopting WCRF Model



04

Replicability

Early Signals that the Model is Flexible, and Effective even beyond Maharashtra



While the One-Acre Model was incubated and refined over a decade in Maharashtra, its relevance for national-scale transition could only be established by testing it beyond its original ecosystem. Maharashtra benefited from relatively strong civil society presence, mature community institutions, and sustained programmatic support. To credibly position the model as a transition pathway for NMNF, it was therefore necessary to examine whether it could take root in geographies with different agro-climatic conditions, institutional strengths, and farmer realities.

SSP piloted the model in two contrasting geographies—Bidar in Karnataka and Wayanad in Kerala—deliberately chosen to test different dimensions of replicability.

Bidar district in northern Karnataka represents a semi-arid, rain-fed agricultural landscape characterised by erratic rainfall, climate stress, and widespread dependence on chemical inputs. While the agro-climatic conditions are broadly similar to parts of Marathwada where the model was first developed, the institutional ecosystem in Bidar—particularly the presence of long-standing civil society programmes supporting natural farming—is comparatively weaker. This made Bidar an ideal testing ground to understand whether the model could succeed in contexts with lower ecosystem support and limited prior exposure to natural farming practices.

Wayanad district in Kerala, by contrast, presents an entirely different agricultural environment. The region

is characterised by high rainfall, hilly terrain, and extremely small landholdings, where farms often function as homestead systems integrating crops such as banana, pepper, coffee, and vegetables. In such landscapes, carving out a dedicated “model acre” is often not feasible. The pilot therefore focused on adapting the approach through kitchen gardens and post-harvest plots, allowing farmers to experiment with natural farming practices within the constraints of their terrain and cropping systems.

Beyond these pilots, five organizations across four states have expressed strong interest in adopting the model, reinforcing its relevance across diverse contexts and strengthening the case for its wider application beyond Maharashtra.

Across geographies, the One-Acre Model retains its core philosophy of enabling low-risk experimentation led by women, even as its physical expression adapts to local realities

At its heart, the model consistently follows the same logic: start small through women, allow farmers to learn quickly, build confidence through visible results, and scale practices gradually. What “starting small” and “scale practices” look like, however, varies by context. For instance, in Bidar, women typically initiated natural farming on 0.25–0.5 acres, with clear pathways to scale across larger family landholdings of up to five

acres. In Wayanad, where land holdings are smaller and terrain restrictive, the entry point shifted to kitchen gardens and post-harvest plots, later extending practices – for example, intercropping vegetables within banana or use of less chemicals for growing paddy.

Across both contexts, the model's value proposition remained constant. Improved household nutrition, reduced health-related expenses, and lower cultivation costs emerged as the primary motivators—creating early wins that anchored farmer confidence and sustained adoption.

Early outcomes from both pilot regions indicate that meaningful impacts can emerge even in the initial cycles of adoption outside Maharashtra

Across Bidar and Wayanad, farmers who have practiced the model over two to three cropping cycles report

consistent benefits rather than one-off gains. In Bidar, families who began with small vegetable plots expanded into pulses and main crops over successive seasons, experiencing steady reductions in input costs, improved crop quality, and greater resilience during erratic rainfall and flooding events. In Wayanad, repeated cycles of kitchen gardening and homestead cultivation strengthened household food security and reinforced women's decision-making role, even within highly land-constrained settings.

Importantly, benefits compounded over cycles—confidence increased, practices spilled over to larger plots or intercropping systems, and male family members became active supporters. These multi-season outcomes provide early but credible evidence that the model can generate durable impacts across agro-climatic zones.

Exhibit 8

At a Glance – outreach and outputs achieved through the two-year pilot of the model in two districts outside Maharashtra

2,000

Women Farmers

have adopted the WCRF model across 20 villages in two districts



20

Demonstration Plots

were developed for effective training dissemination



20

Community Resource Persons

were developed through the program



4

Agricultural Seasons

over a period of two years



The two pilots also surfaced learnings that underscore while the core philosophy remains intact, successful replication depends on thoughtful contextual adaptation

- Transition succeeds when the model bends to local crops, land realities, and institutions—without diluting its core philosophy: Crop choices and land use strategies must align with local agro-ecology.

In Bidar, farmers began with vegetables and pulses on small plots before extending practices to rainfed cash crops, while in Wayanad, kitchen gardens, homestead plots, and intercropping within banana and paddy systems became the primary entry points. Institutional partnerships also varied—requiring deeper engagement with KVKs and agriculture departments in Karnataka, and stronger alignment with local self-help group structures in Kerala.

- b. Farmers' starting points matter; subsistence and tribal households adopt differently than chemical-intensive cultivators: Tribal and subsistence farmers, particularly in Wayanad, faced fewer behavioural barriers but required support for productivity enhancement and market linkage. In contrast, chemical-intensive farmers in Bidar needed confidence-building micro-pilots to overcome fear of yield loss and dependency on external inputs.
- c. Kitchen gardens and post-harvest plots emerge as the most powerful low-risk laboratories for behavioural change: Across both Bidar and Wayanad, these spaces consistently emerged as the safest and most effective entry points for natural farming. Located close to the household and detached from primary cash crops, kitchen gardens and post-harvest plots allowed women to experiment without threatening household income. Early results—improved taste, visible crop health, extended shelf

life, and reduced dependence on market vegetables—generated rapid feedback loops that strengthened confidence. In Wayanad, where landholdings are extremely small and terrain limits “one-acre” allocation, homestead plots became the primary transition pathway. In Bidar, post-harvest plots enabled gradual expansion toward pulses and main crops. These micro-sites proved critical in converting abstract awareness into lived practice, underscoring that transition succeeds when farmers are given spaces to test, observe, and trust natural farming before scaling.

The experience from Bidar and Wayanad suggests that while farming systems vary widely across India, the underlying logic of small-plot experimentation and gradual scaling remains widely applicable. These early signals strengthen the case for integrating such transition pathways within national programmes such as the National Mission on Natural Farming.

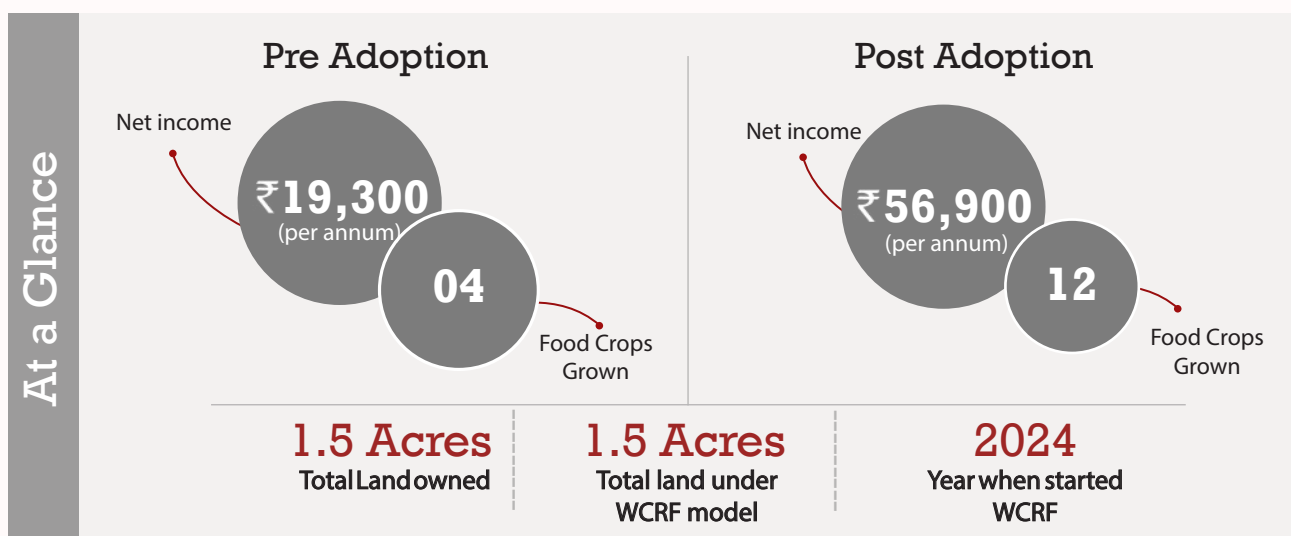
Success Story

“Vegetables from my farm feel more delicious now than the ones we used to buy from the market.”

From High Costs and Hard Soil to Food Security and Confidence: Shivalila Patil's Gradual Transition to Natural Farming

Shivalila and her husband Shivaraj Patil from Khatgaon own 2.25 acres of land and have been practicing agriculture on 1.5 acres for many years. Chemical farming had hardened their soil, increased input costs, and affected the family's health and food security. In early 2024, Shivalila learned about SSP's WCRF natural farming model through CRPs and village meetings. Though initially afraid of crop failure and pest attacks, she decided to experiment on just 10 guntas (0.25 acres). Observing visible improvements in soil health, cost reduction, and yields, she expanded natural farming to the whole farmland by the next season. Today, her farm provides diverse food crops, stable yields, and renewed confidence in farming.

Exhibit 9





INR 11,700
spent on fertilisers and
pesticides every year

How it all started

Having practiced chemical-heavy farming all their lives, Shivalila and her husband Shivraj were noticing the soil of their land hardening, with water stagnating for longer periods. Despite spending money on fertilisers and pesticides every season, the quality of their produce was not improving, and costs of cultivation were skyrocketing. The family had very minimal idea regarding natural farming from watching videos on the internet but were underconfident to try it.

After learning about the WCRF model from CRP trainings in early 2024, she and her husband filled their knowledge gaps on the various components of natural farming and decided to experiment on only a small portion of their land. Their intention was to see whether it was improving the quality of their yield.

Like many farmers, they were worried about crop failure and pest attacks. However, there was one assurance that motivated them—even if the experiment failed, the family would have at least something to eat.

The experiment did not fail and soon Shivalila and her husband observed massive improvements in their yield, so much so that they converted their whole farmland to natural farming by the next season. Growing 5-7 varieties of vegetables, the family had not only secured enough food for the family but had also reduced dependence on market bought items.

The Transition

Shivalila's transition to natural farming was gradual and carefully planned. She began with a small trial plot of 10 guntas (0.25 acres) during Rabi 2024, growing onion, chili, garlic, fenugreek, moth beans, okra and pumpkin. As farm decisions were jointly taken by husband and wife, they closely observed the crops throughout the season and discussed each change of practice in detail—something that was to become common after the first adoption season.

Encouraged by highly positive results, she installed a vermi-compost bed in early 2025 and expanded natural farming to the whole 1.5 acres of her farmland during Kharif 2025, cultivating Black Gram (Urad), Green Gram (Moong), Pigeon Pea (Toor), and Soybean using natural inputs—like dahineta, bhramastra and dashparni ark—prepared at home.

One of the most visible changes the family had observed was in soil health. Earlier, chemical use had made the soil hard, causing water stagnation. After adopting natural practices, the soil became softer, water percolation improved, and moisture retention increased. With the improvement in soil, the quality of the yield improved as well. **“The sizes of vegetables were bigger than before,”** claimed Shivaraj Patil.

With input costs almost eliminated and food needs met from the farm itself, Shivalila gained confidence in the model. These benefits convinced her that returning to chemical farming was no longer an option.



“We had some knowledge about natural farming but were not confident enough to use that on our land. SSP’s training gave us that confidence.”

Shivraj Patil
Shivalila's husband



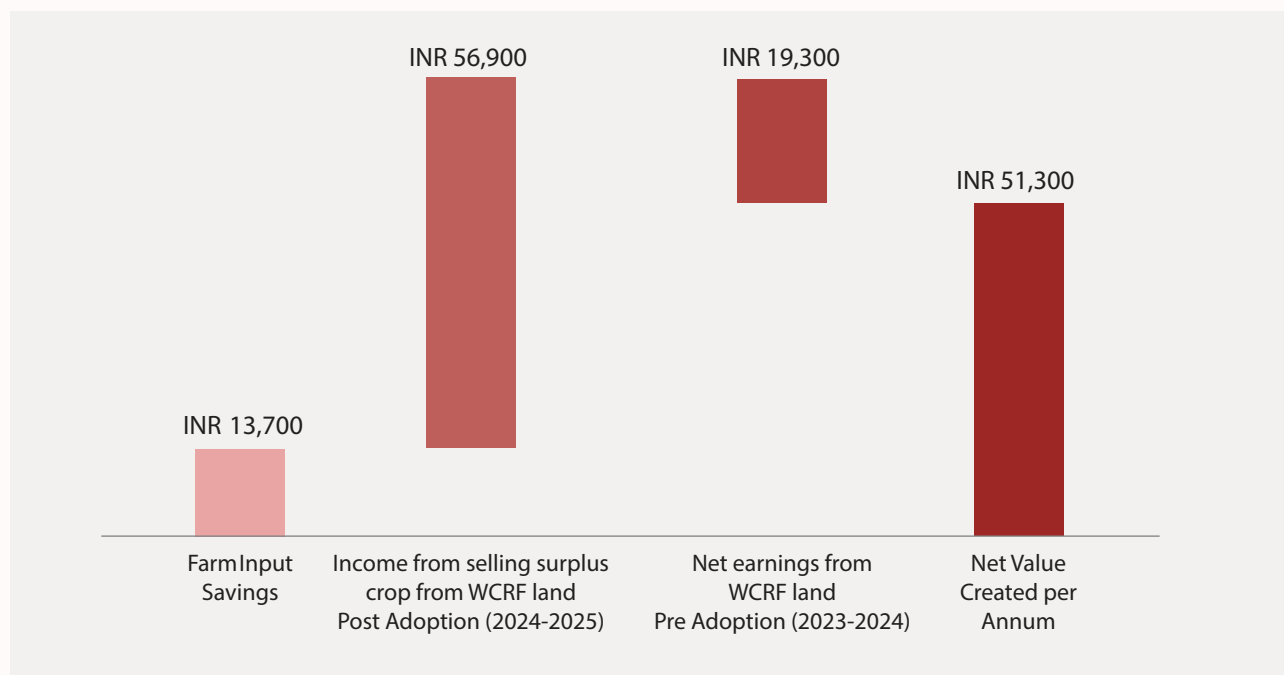
INR 56,900 earned
from farm after adoption

Key Results

- 1. Economic Viability of Farming**- Shivalila has significantly reduced her cost of cultivation by eliminating chemical fertilisers and pesticides, which earlier cost around INR 11,700 every year. Natural inputs prepared at home now meet most farm requirements. Sale of surplus Black Gram (Urad), Green Gram (Moong) and vegetables has added to household income, while stable yield through food crop diversification has reduced financial risk. The family has also entered into the business of selling milk after purchasing two cows and a buffalo from the surplus income generated after adoption.
- 2. Food and Nutrition Security**- Earlier, the family was dependant on the market for vegetables, pulses, and rice. Today, most vegetables and pulses come directly from Shivalila's farm, and only rice is purchased from outside. This shift has improved dietary diversity and reduced annual food expenses. Access to fresh, chemical-free produce throughout the year has improved productivity of the family, as they can now work for longer hours on their land without being even a bit tired.
- 3. Ecological Regeneration**- Natural farming practices have visibly improved soil health on the land. The soil, once hard and prone to water stagnation, is now softer with better moisture retention and percolation. Use of jeevamrut, cow dung, cow urine, and dashpani ark has restored soil structure and has made it resilient to climatic shocks, like flood.
- 4. Women Empowerment**- Through the WCRF model, Shivalila has emerged as a confident decision-maker in farming. While decisions were always taken jointly with her husband, discussions have become more informed and detailed after adoption. **"Most of my neighbours' compliment about the deliciousness of my vegetables and ask me how I prepare the natural inputs",** Shivalila beamed.

Exhibit 10

Net Value Created Per Annum Post Adoption of SSP's WCRF Model



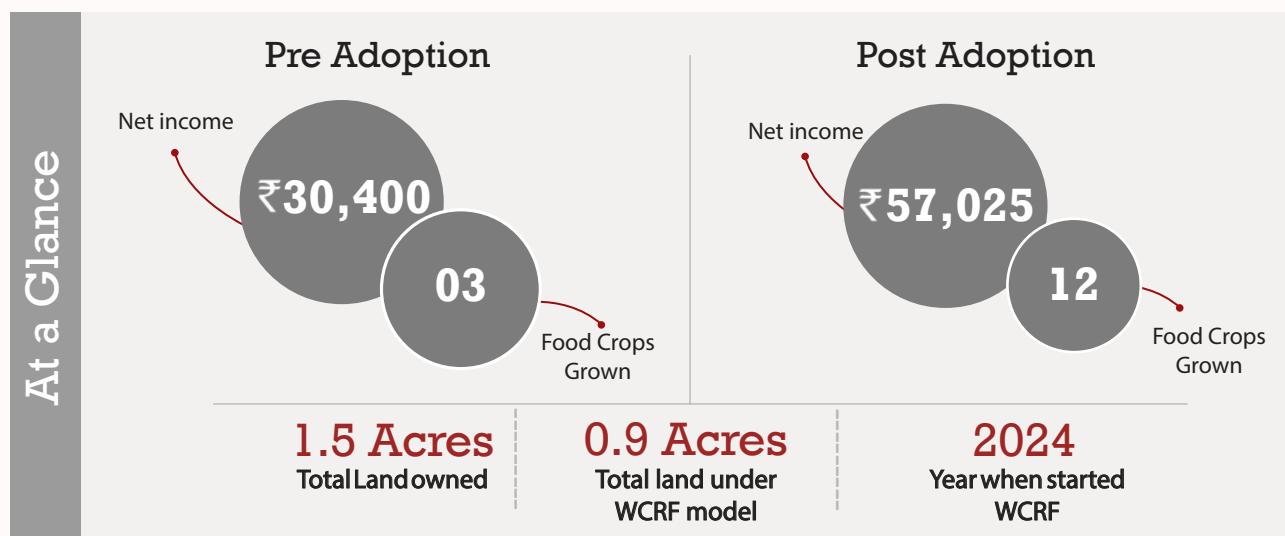
Success Story

“Earlier, I only helped with farm work. Now, after learning new farming techniques, I feel proud that I can contribute to farming decisions with my husband.”

Working under water-scarce conditions and without livestock, Geeta developed 90 cents (0.9 acres) of intercropped vegetables, leading to economic gains, better health outcomes, and greater participation in farm decisions through the WCRF model

Before adopting natural farming, Geeta and her husband cultivated paddy, banana, and areca nut on their 1.5 acres of land and depended on the market for vegetables, where rising prices increased household expenses and affected food quality. After attending SSP training in 2023, Geeta began natural farming on a small kitchen garden of 3–5 cents. While the initial harvest provided fresh vegetables, it was not sufficient for her family of four. Encouraged by the results, she gradually expanded vegetable cultivation, reaching 90 cents by Kharif 2025. Today, her farm produces a range of seasonal vegetables, saves around ₹1,600 per month in household expenses, earns approximately ₹57,000 per year from surplus produce, and serves as a local example of natural farming for neighbouring farmers.

Exhibit 11





spent INR 400-500
every week on buying
vegetables from market



spent INR 8900
on fertilisers and pesticides
every year



Adopted WCRF in
Zaid 2024

"We had heard about natural farming, but we were confused and worried about whether we would get returns and whether the produce would find a market. SSP's training gave us the knowledge and confidence to try it on our land."

Geeta's Husband

How it all started

"We had heard about natural farming, but we did not know how to practice it properly," Geeta shared during the interaction. Geeta and her husband have been farming their 1.5 acres of land using chemicals, growing mainly paddy along with banana and arecanut. Vegetable cultivation was minimal and limited to one season, which meant the household depended on the market for most of its food needs.

Geeta worked alongside her husband on the farm, contributing mainly through labour. Decisions on cropping and farm management were largely taken by her husband, while Geeta supported day-to-day activities. The lack of crop diversity and dependence on paddy made the household vulnerable to climatic risks, especially flooding, which is common in the region.

High input costs and the need to regularly purchase vegetables added to household expenses. Without livestock, the family also had limited access to farmyard manure and relied on chemical fertilisers and pesticides for crop management.

Geeta first learnt about the WCRF one-acre model through SSP's training programmes and exposure visits. Although she was initially unsure about yields and market outcomes, the training helped her understand alternative practices. Gradually gaining confidence, she decided to try natural farming on a small portion of her land, with her husband's support.

The Transition

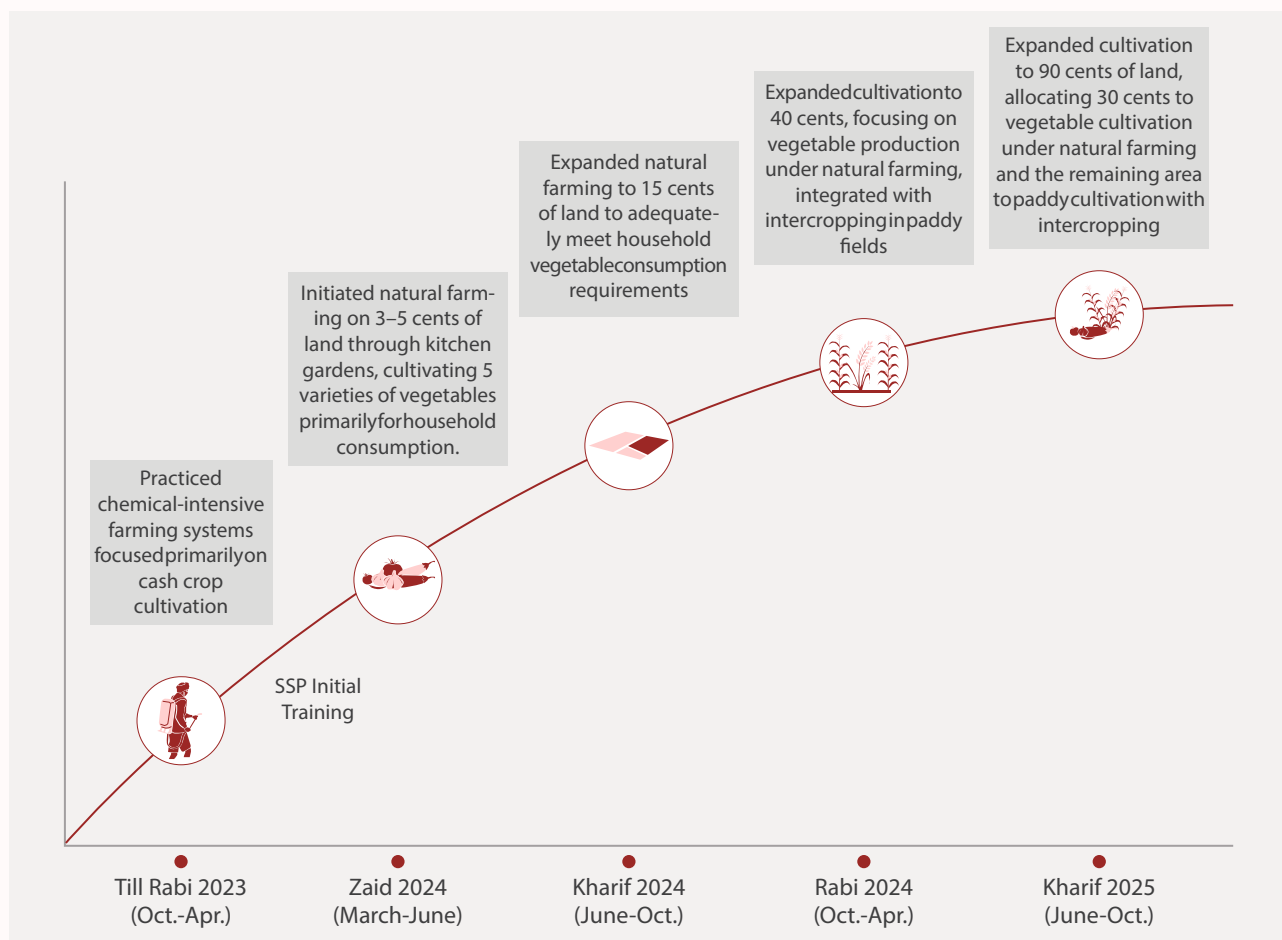
After attending SSP's initial training in 2023, Geeta decided to begin natural farming on a small scale. She started with a kitchen garden of about 3–5 cents during the zaid season (2024), growing vegetables such as chillies and tomatoes. While the produce was fresh and chemical-free, the quantity and diversity was not sufficient to meet the needs of her family of four.

Encouraged by the visible results, Geeta gradually increased the area under vegetable cultivation over the following seasons. With continued training support, she began practising intercropping and introduced a wider variety of seasonal vegetables. By Rabi 2024, the cultivated area had expanded to around 40 cents, and by Kharif 2025, Geeta had brought nearly 90 cents of her land under the WCRF one-acre model.

Despite facing water scarcity and not owning cattle, Geeta continued the transition by using externally sourced bio-inputs such as neem cake and neem oil, applied as advised during training. The diversification of crops reduced her dependence on paddy alone and helped spread production across seasons.

Overtime, the gradual expansion improved household availability of vegetables and created surplus for sale. The transition also marked a shift in Geeta's role on the farm, as she became actively involved in decisions related to crop selection and farm practices, working closely with her husband.

From distress to leadership – Geeta’s inspiring transition story



Key Results



INR 34,125 earned
more post adoption

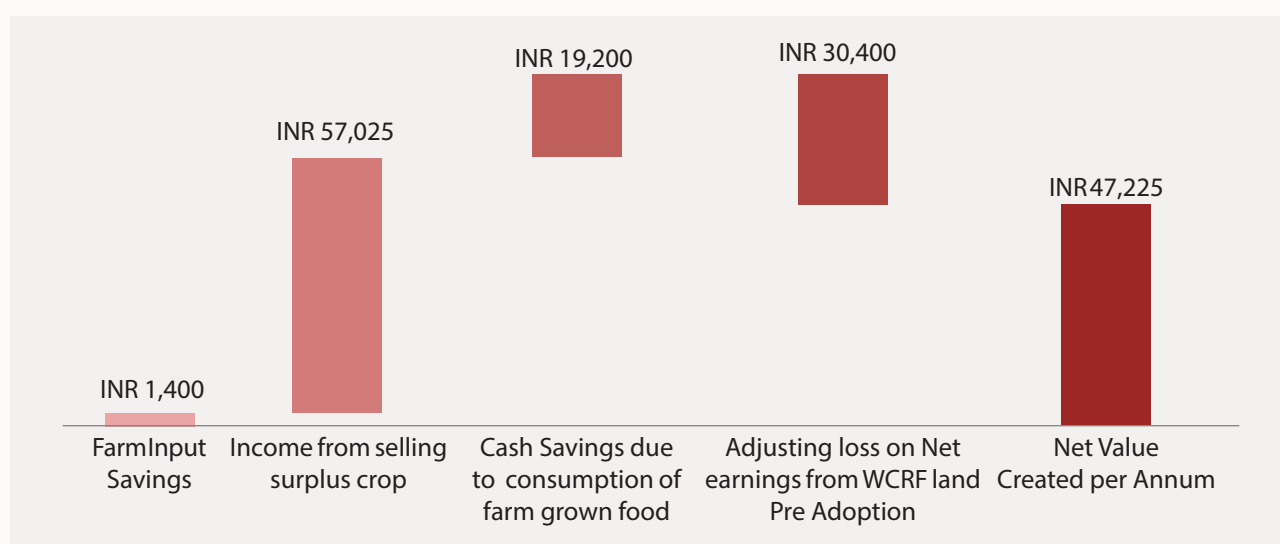
1. **Economic Viability of Farming-** With the expansion of vegetable cultivation across seasons, Geeta’s household has significantly reduced its dependence on the market. Regular availability of vegetables from the farm has resulted in monthly savings of around ₹1,600 in household food expenses. In addition, the sale of surplus produce has generated an estimated annual income of approximately ₹57,000. This additional income has helped the family manage routine expenses and loan repayments more effectively.
2. **Food and Nutrition Security-** Geeta’s household now consumes a wider variety of seasonal vegetables grown on their own farm. The availability of different vegetables across seasons has improved dietary diversity within the household. Geeta also noted a change in health outcomes, sharing “**Earlier I used to take medicines because of body pain. Now I don’t need to take any regular medicines for that**”. At present, no family member requires regular medication. Regular consumption of fresh, chemical-free produce has contributed to better dietary intake and overall health for the family.
3. **Ecological Regeneration-** The shift from a cash crop dominated system to diversified intercropping has improved the resilience of Geeta’s farm. By growing multiple vegetables and tubers alongside existing crops, the family has reduced the risk associated with crop failure due to flooding or erratic rainfall. The use of neem-based bio-inputs and reduced

or erratic rainfall. The use of neem-based bio-inputs and reduced chemical application has also supported more sustainable soil and crop management practices, even in the absence of livestock.

4. **Women Empowerment-** As Geeta's knowledge of natural farming practices increased through training and regular practice, her role on the farm evolved. She now actively participates in decisions related to crop selection, cultivation practices, and use of farm income, working jointly with her husband. Alongside this shift within the household, her farm has gained recognition within the community, with neighbouring farmers approaching her for advice on intercropping combinations and seasonal vegetable cultivation. This has positioned Geeta as a local example of women-led natural farming, even under conditions of water scarcity and lack of livestock.

Exhibit 13

Net Value Created per Annum after Adopting WCRF Model



What do our network partners say?



By building a network of partners united around a shared mission, SSP is fostering richer peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and driving the rapid scale-up of natural farming practices across India.

Biswamohan Mohanty
Director, Orrisa, Odisha



The model helps Mahamaya support women farmers better by entering agriculture as a new but crucial area, offering benefits directly to women.

Ramesh Jalba Bigaonkar
Founder, Mahamaya Rural Development Society, Karnataka



Climate impacts demand stronger food and livelihood resilience for tribal women; this partnership will help us expand HUME's climate work into sustainable agriculture, now an essential focus area.

Hridhya Revathy P A
Research Assistant, Hume Centre for Ecology and Wildlife Biology, Kerala



Although Kerala has a very different agro-climatic condition (than Maharashtra), I feel SSP's WCRF model can be contextualized and made relevant to suit the needs of the farmers there.

Ranjini A R
Lead Climate Action Program, Hume Centre for Ecology and Wildlife Biology, Kerala



By applying the learnings from SSP, we will aim to strengthen our FPO's work in advancing food and nutrition security and sustainable livelihoods for our 500 member farmers and their families.

Molly Tomichan
Director, Keravriksha Coconut Producer Company, Kerala



SSP's WCRF model advances chemical-free farming and healthier food systems while empowering women, fitting well with our existing climate and community work.

Archana Kumari
MEAL Officer, Ghoghardiha Prakhand Swarajya Vikas Sangh (GPSVS), Bihar



This partnership with SSP can help us re-engage youth in farming, and enable young women to adopt natural farming practices.

Ashok Kumar Singh Yadav
Ghoghardiha Prakhand Swarajya Vikas Sangh (GPSVS), Bihar

Note : These quotes have been shortened and paraphrased from longer verbatims of the partner representatives for condensing the key message

What does the government say?



Government trainings create awareness, but models like SSP's WCRF ensure continuity—handholding farmers across crop cycles, linking them to KVK knowledge, creating demand for bio-inputs and helping the National Mission on Natural Farming scale effectively at the grassroots.

Dr. Barikara Umesh

District Nodal Officer of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bidar, Karnataka



The one-acre approach builds farmer confidence through soil awareness and gradual improvement, making sustainable practices easier to adopt.

Mr. Ravi Mavilan

Senior Chemist, Soil Conservation Department, Wayanad



SSP's WCRF model demonstrates how livestock-led natural farming reduces risk for farmers—starting small, building confidence, and expanding gradually—an approach that aligns well with the government's natural farming mission.

Dr. R.G Bijurkar

Professor and Head, Department of Veterinary Clinical Complex, Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University, Bidar, Karnataka



When farmers see reduced cultivation costs and stable yields after two seasons, adoption rate increases. Structured models like the WCRF can really help the government demonstrate NMNF outcomes effectively at the ground level as well as drive demand with subsidies on essential bio-inputs.

Mr. Kailashnath

Technical Officer, Joint Directorate of Agriculture (JDA) District Office, Bidar, Karnataka



The one-acre design offers a practical, risk-buffered pathway for diversified cropping and gradual transition to sustainable, chemical-less farming systems.

Dr. Seeram V.

Assistant Professor, Regional Agriculture Resources Station (RARS), Kerala Agriculture University, Wayanad



Starting with small kitchen gardens ensures safe food for families and builds confidence to gradually expand natural farming practices.

Mr. Bipin

Agriculture Officer, Kothatara Panchayat

Note : These quotes have been shortened and paraphrased from longer verbatims of the government stakeholders for condensing the key message

05

Key Policy Integration Pathways**Integrating Transition Pathways into National Mission on Natural Farming**

As the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) moves from policy intent to large-scale implementation, the central challenge is no longer whether natural farming should be promoted, but how farmers are supported through the transition from chemical-intensive systems to natural practices. Field evidence from multiple geographies suggests that adoption is most constrained not by lack of interest, but by gaps in transition support—related to risk, confidence, access to inputs, handholding, and institutional coordination across seasons.

The Policy Integration Matrix presented in this chapter outlines a set of complementary pathways through which NMNF can strengthen its last-mile effectiveness.

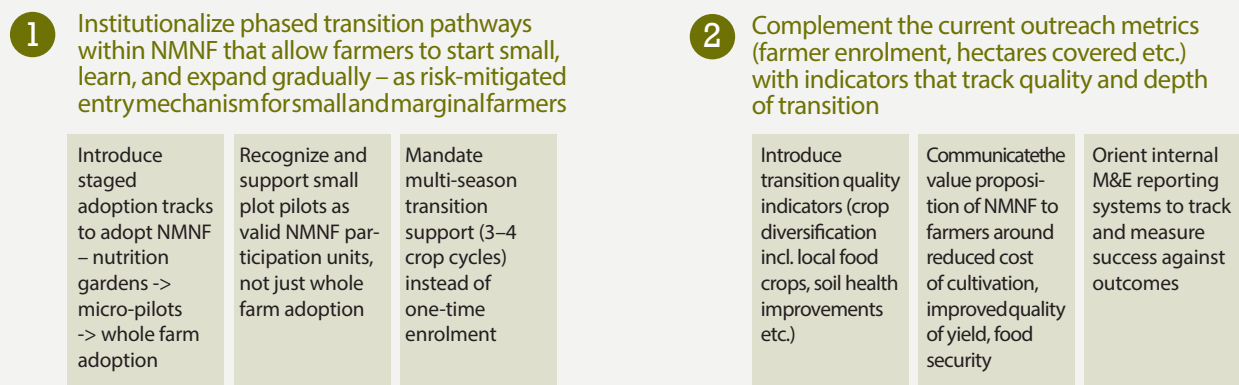
Rather than proposing parallel systems, the matrix identifies opportunities to augment existing NMNF architecture by embedding phased transition pathways, strengthening frontline human infrastructure, centering women as system enablers, decentralizing access to knowledge and inputs, proactively managing transition risks, and harmonizing the roles of complementary departments.

Together, these pathways translate NMNF's national ambition into practical, farmer-centric mechanisms that enable smallholders to start safely, learn iteratively, and scale adoption with confidence—supporting durable, high-quality transition rather than one-time enrollment.

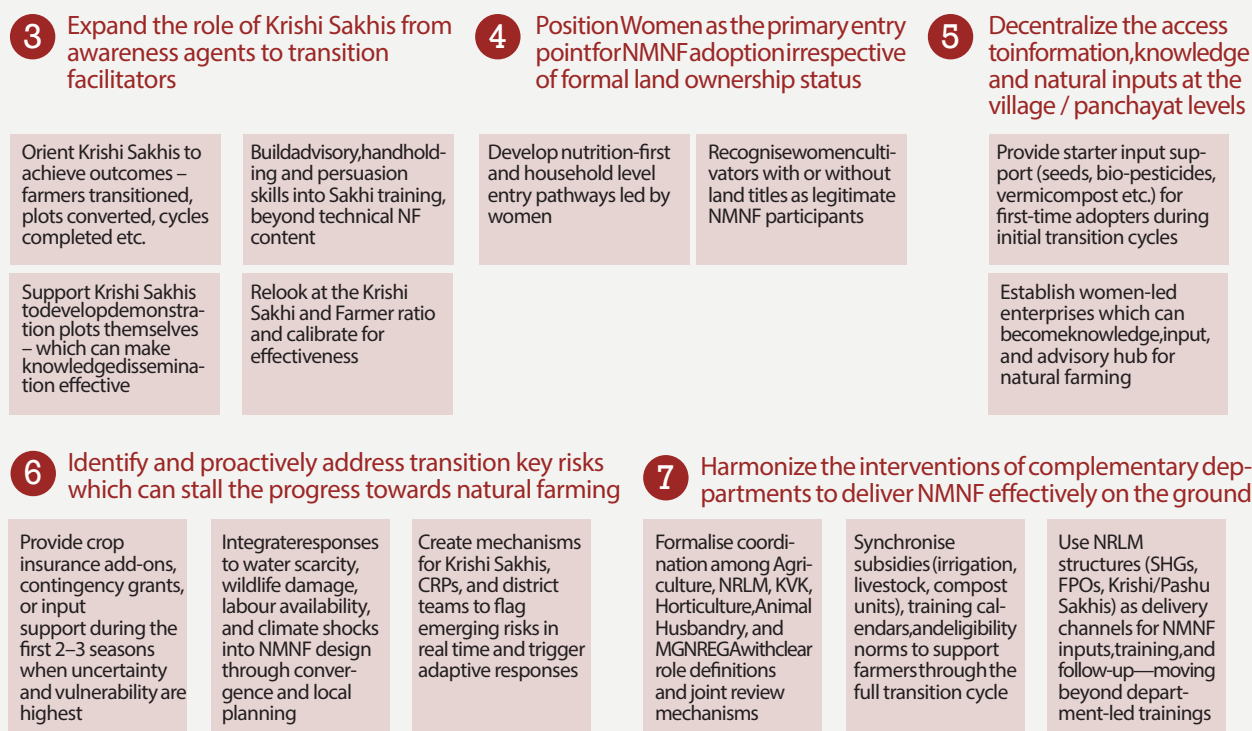
Exhibit 14

Policy Integration Matrix: Embedding the WCRF Transition Pathway within the NMNF Framework for smallholder farmers

What are the opportunities to augment NMNF Policy Design to enable and monitor transition towards natural farming?



How to operationalize the phased transition towards natural farming?



What are the **opportunities to augment NMNF Policy Design to enable and monitor transition** towards natural farming?

The early stages of NMNF implementation provide an opportunity to incorporate practical transition pathways that help farmers adopt natural farming with confidence. SSP's experience suggests that farmers are more likely to adopt and sustain natural practices when they can begin with small, manageable experiments, receive structured support during the first few cycles, and observe visible results before expanding to larger areas. The following recommendations focus on **policy design elements that can strengthen farmer transition within the NMNF framework**.

1. Institutionalize phased transition pathways within NMNF that allow farmers to start small, learn, and expand gradually – reducing uncertainties, especially for small and marginal farmers

Natural farming adoption is often constrained not by lack of farmer interest but by uncertainty during the transition phase. A phased transition pathway—where farmers begin with small plots before expanding practices—can reduce perceived risks and allow farmers to build confidence over successive seasons. Integrating such staged adoption pathways within NMNF can make the transition process more accessible for smallholder farmers.

1.1 Introduce staged adoption tracks to adopt NMNF – nutrition gardens -> micro-plots -> whole farm transition

Context (Why?)	Smallholders are highly risk-averse, with livelihoods dependent on one or two seasonal crops. Immediate whole-farm transition increases fear of yield loss and income shocks. Field evidence from Bidar and Wayanad shows that farmers adopt more readily when they can first experiment in kitchen gardens, post-harvest plots, or small micro-pilots that do not threaten household cash flows.
Action (What?)	NMNFs should formally recognize and design staged adoption tracks—beginning with nutrition gardens or homestead plots, progressing to small micro-pilots (0.1–0.5 acres), and finally to whole-farm transition. Program guidelines should explicitly define these stages as valid participation pathways, with differentiated support packages aligned to each stage.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Staged tracks lower the psychological and economic barriers to entry, increase experimentation, and reduce early drop-outs. They allow farmers to build technical skills and confidence before scaling, leading to higher-quality adoption, stronger retention, and more durable natural farming transitions across seasons.

1.2 Recognize and support small plot pilots as valid NMNF participation units, not just whole farm adoption

Context (Why?)	Current program logics often privilege hectare-level coverage and full-plot conversion. However, SSP's pilots show that many of the most successful transitions begin on small plots controlled by women, where learning, experimentation, and behavioural change are fastest and least risky.
Action (What?)	NMNFs should formally treat small-plot pilots as legitimate units of participation and reporting. Program MIS, guidelines, and success metrics should allow micro-plots, kitchen gardens, and post-harvest plots to be counted as transition entry points, with appropriate technical and input support.

Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Recognizing small plots legitimizes low-risk experimentation, expands participation among women and land-poor households, and accelerates learning-led adoption. It also improves the accuracy of NMNF monitoring by capturing real transition behaviour rather than only large-scale declarations.
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1.3 Mandate multi-season transition support (3–4 crop cycles) instead of one-time enrolment

Context (Why?)	Natural farming transition is a learning process that unfolds over multiple seasons. One-time trainings or single-season enrolment fail to support farmers through setbacks, crop-specific challenges, and confidence-building required for sustained adoption.
Action (What?)	NMNF should mandate structured multi-season transition support for enrolled farmers—covering at least 3–4 crop cycles. This should include planned follow-ups, seasonal troubleshooting, and progressive learning milestones rather than treating enrolment as a one-time event.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Multi-season support transforms NMNF from a training program into a true transition system. It improves technical mastery, reduces abandonment after early challenges, and increases the likelihood that farmers will expand natural practices from pilot plots to core cash crops.

2. Complement the current outreach metrics (farmer enrolment, hectares covered etc.) with indicators that track quality and depth of transition

As NMNF scales, its success will be judged not only by how many farmers are enrolled or how many hectares are covered, but by how deeply and durably farmers transition away from chemical practices. Evidence from SSP's pilots suggests that adoption quality—such as diversification, repeat cycles, and soil health improvements—is a stronger predictor of long-term impact than enrolment alone. Introducing transition quality indicators will help NMNF track whether behavioural and agronomic change is truly taking root.

2.1 Introduce transition quality indicators (crop diversification, local food crops, soil health improvements, etc.)

Context (Why?)	Coverage metrics do not capture whether farmers are meaningfully changing practices or merely participating nominally. In early transition phases, farmers may still rely on chemicals for some crops while experimenting on others, making hectare-based reporting an incomplete proxy for real adoption.
Action (What?)	NMNF should introduce transition quality indicators such as number of crops diversified, proportion of local food crops, use of bio-inputs, and improvements in soil health parameters. These indicators should be embedded into monitoring tools alongside existing coverage data.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Tracking transition quality will enable NMNF to distinguish superficial participation from genuine practice change, improving program targeting, learning, and accountability. It will also strengthen evidence on what drives successful and sustained natural farming transitions.

2.2 Communicate the value proposition of NMNF to farmers around reduced cost of cultivation, improved quality of yield, and food security

Context (Why?)	Farmers' primary decision drivers are economic viability, household food security, and visible crop performance. Messaging that focuses primarily on environmental or policy goals may fail to address the practical motivations that influence farmer behaviour.
Action (What?)	NMNF communication strategies should explicitly foreground farmer-relevant outcomes such as reduced input costs, improved taste and shelf life, household vegetable security, and resilience to climate variability—using local demonstrations and farmer testimonials.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Reframing NMNF around tangible farmer benefits will strengthen uptake, reduce resistance, and align program messaging with real on-ground incentives that motivate sustained adoption.

2.3 Orient internal M&E reporting systems to track and measure success against outcomes, not only activities

Context (Why?)	Current reporting systems often prioritize activities conducted (trainings held, meetings organised) rather than outcomes achieved (practice change, crop diversification, repeat adoption cycles).
Action (What?)	NMNF's M&E systems should be reoriented to track outcome indicators such as number of farmers completing multiple transition cycles, expansion of natural practices, and reductions in chemical input use.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Outcome-oriented M&E will improve learning, adaptive management, and policy feedback loops—ensuring NMNF investments translate into durable agronomic and behavioural change rather than short-term activity compliance.

How to operationalize the phased transition towards natural farming?

Translating phased transition pathways into practice requires strengthening the human, institutional, and delivery systems that support farmers on the ground. This involves reorienting frontline cadres, centering women as transition leaders, decentralizing access to knowledge and inputs, proactively managing transition risks, and improving convergence across departments. The operational recommendations that follow focus on how NMNF can leverage existing structures—such as Krishi Sakhis, NRLM platforms, KVKs, and FPOs—to move from awareness-led outreach toward sustained, outcome-driven support for farmers navigating multi-season transition journeys.

3. Expand the role of Krishi Sakhis from awareness agents to transition facilitators

Krishi Sakhis represent one of NMNF’s most powerful last-mile delivery assets. However, current mandates largely position them as awareness and training conduits, rather than as sustained transition facilitators. Field insights from Bidar and Wayanad indicate that farmers require repeated handholding, on-field troubleshooting, and confidence-building over multiple seasons. Upgrading Krishi Sakhis into transition facilitators would significantly strengthen NMNF’s capacity to support real behavioural and practice change.

In some states like Maharashtra, Krishi Sakhis might already take transition-facilitator responsibilities, however, in other geographies like Karnataka and Kerala, they are yet to adopt this extended role. NMNF can explore how different geographies can uniformly leverage Krishi Sakhis in the transitioning smallholder farmers towards natural farming.

3.1 Orient Krishi Sakhis to achieve outcome metrics – farmers transitioned, plots converted, cycles completed

Context (Why?)	At present, Krishi Sakhis are typically evaluated on activity metrics such as meetings conducted or farmers sensitized. This does not incentivize sustained engagement or accountability for actual practice change on farms.
Action (What?)	NMNF should revise Krishi Sakhi SOPs and performance frameworks to include outcome metrics such as number of farmers completing transition cycles, number of plots converted, and progression from pilots to main crops.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Outcome-linked roles will align frontline incentives with NMNF’s long-term goals, strengthening farmer follow-up, improving transition success rates, and reducing superficial participation.

3.2 Build advisory, handholding, and persuasion skills into Sakhi training, beyond technical natural farming content

Context (Why?)	Transition barriers are often behavioural and risk-related, not purely technical. Field interactions show that farmers need reassurance, problem-solving, and motivation—skills that go beyond agronomic knowledge.
Action (What?)	Krishi Sakhi training curricula should include modules on farmer counselling, behaviour change communication, risk management conversations, and peer learning facilitation, in addition to technical natural farming practices.

Possible Augmentation
for NMNF (So what?)

Strengthening soft and facilitation skills will enable Sakhis to address farmer fears, sustain engagement across seasons, and convert awareness into real adoption.

3.3 Support Krishi Sakhis to develop and manage demonstration plots to strengthen experiential learning

Context (Why?)

Farmers consistently trust what they can see. Demonstration plots operated by trusted local actors accelerate learning and reduce perceived risk.

Action (What?)

NMNF should formally support Krishi Sakhis to establish and manage small demonstration plots or learning farms, with input and technical backing, as live transition laboratories.

Possible Augmentation
for NMNF (So what?)

Demonstration plots will improve credibility, accelerate peer learning, and strengthen farmer confidence—making adoption faster and more durable.

3.4 Recalibrate the Krishi Sakhi-to-farmer ratio to enable sustained handholding across seasons

Context (Why?)

High Sakhi-to-farmer ratios limit the ability to provide individualized follow-up, especially during early transition cycles when support needs are highest.

Action (What?)

NMNF should review and recalibrate Sakhi-to-farmer ratios, or supplement Sakhis with additional local transition facilitators where needed, to ensure adequate time for seasonal follow-up.

Possible Augmentation
for NMNF (So what?)

Improved ratios will make sustained transition support operationally feasible, increasing completion of multi-season transitions and reducing early-stage abandonment.

4. Position women as the primary entry point for NMNF adoption irrespective of formal land ownership status

Women are central to smallholder agriculture, food crop management, and household nutrition, yet remain structurally excluded from many formal transition pathways due to land title requirements. Evidence from SSP's One-Acre Model shows that women-led micro-pilots are among the most effective low-risk entry points for natural farming. Positioning women as primary transition agents—regardless of land ownership—can significantly accelerate NMNF's last-mile adoption and deepen household-level behavioural change.

4.1 Develop nutrition-first and household-level entry pathways led by women

Context (Why?)

Many women lack formal land titles but actively manage kitchen gardens, homestead plots, and post-harvest land. These spaces are ideal for initiating low-risk natural farming practices that directly affect household food security.

Action (What?)	NMNF should formally design nutrition-first and household-level transition tracks led by women, recognizing kitchen gardens and homestead plots as legitimate NMNF entry points.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	This will expand program reach, enable early wins in food security, and create confidence pathways that lead to wider farm-level adoption over time.

4.2 Recognise women cultivators with or without land titles as legitimate NMNF participants

Context (Why?)	Land-title-based eligibility excludes a large proportion of active women cultivators, limiting their access to schemes, training, and transition support.
Action (What?)	NMNF should explicitly recognise women cultivators—whether or not they hold land titles—as eligible participants for training, inputs, and transition support.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	This will correct structural exclusion, unlock a large pool of motivated transition leaders, and improve gender equity and scale of NMNF adoption.

4.3 Enable women-led micro-pilots as formal stepping stones to family-level transition

Context (Why?)	Women often have influence over small plot even when larger land decisions are male-dominated. These plots serve as proof points that can shift household decision-making.
Action (What?)	NMNF should formalise women-led micro-pilots as recognised stepping stones toward full household and farm-level transition, including pathways for gradual expansion.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	This will leverage women's early success to unlock broader household adoption, accelerating transition while minimizing perceived risk.

5. Decentralize access to knowledge, bio-inputs, and seed systems at village or panchayat levels to enable practical, on-demand transition support

Even when farmers are motivated to adopt natural farming, transition is frequently stalled by limited access to timely information, quality bio-inputs, and local seed systems. Field evidence from Bidar and Wayanad shows that lack of decentralized access forces farmers to either abandon transition or rely on market-bought inputs that dilute the integrity of natural farming. Strengthening village-level ecosystems for inputs and knowledge is therefore critical for NMNF's operational success.

5.1 Establish decentralized bio-input and seed access points at village or panchayat level

Context (Why?)	Farmers in early transition often lack access to quality bio-inputs, traditional seeds, and preparation materials at the time they are needed. This creates dependency on chemical inputs or market substitutes, weakening confidence
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in natural farming and interrupting transition cycles. Currently, the Bio-Resource Centres (BRCs) are primarily planned to be set up at the block level.

Action (What?)	NMNF should support decentralized bio-input and seed access points at village or cluster levels—through Bio-Resource Centres (BRCs), FPCs, Women SHGs, or designated local hubs—ensuring timely availability of vermicompost, bio-pesticides, bio-fertilizers, and locally adapted seeds.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Local access will reduce friction in adoption, improve adherence to natural practices, and enable farmers to sustain transition without reverting to chemical inputs due to supply constraints.

5.2 Establish women-led enterprises which can become knowledge, input, and advisory hubs for natural farming

Context (Why?)	Farmers require regular access to bio-inputs, locally adapted seeds, and real-time guidance, particularly during early transition cycles. Current systems do not reliably provide this at the village level, forcing farmers to revert to market-bought chemical inputs or abandon practices when support is unavailable.
Action (What?)	NMNF should enable women-led enterprises—through SHGs, FPCs, or trained local entrepreneurs—to operate as integrated hubs providing bio-inputs, seeds, and advisory support, with linkages to KVKs, Agriculture Departments, and technical agencies for quality assurance and capacity building.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Such hubs will reduce friction in adoption, improve continuity of transition, and create sustainable local infrastructure that strengthens NMNF's last-mile delivery while also generating women-led livelihoods.

6. Identify and proactively address key transition risks that can stall progress towards natural farming

The early phases of transition to natural farming are marked by heightened vulnerability to production, climate, and livelihood risks. Field insights show that even motivated farmers can disengage if shocks occur during initial cycles. Proactively identifying and mitigating these risks within NMNF is critical to sustaining farmer confidence and preventing early reversals during the most fragile stages of transition.

6.1 Embed early-cycle financial and input risk buffers to protect farmers during the most vulnerable transition seasons

Context (Why?)	Farmers perceive the first few transition cycles as high-risk due to uncertainty around yields, pest pressure, and unfamiliar practices. A single adverse season can reinforce scepticism and discourage further experimentation with natural farming.
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Action (What?)	NMNF should introduce targeted risk-buffer mechanisms—such as insurance add-ons, contingency grants, or conditional input support, specifically for farmers in their first 2–3 transition cycles.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	These buffers will reduce fear of loss, encourage continued participation, and significantly improve retention of early adopters through critical learning cycles.

6.2 Mainstream climate, water, wildlife, and labour risk management into NMNF through district-level convergence planning

Context (Why?)	Field evidence highlights that non-agronomic shocks—such as water stress, crop damage by wildlife, labour shortages, and extreme weather—frequently disrupt natural farming adoption, even when technical practices are sound.
Action (What?)	NMNF should formally integrate convergence with soil-water conservation, irrigation, livestock, forest, rural development, and disaster management schemes to address these risks through district and block-level planning.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Embedding risk response into NMNF will improve resilience, reduce farmer attrition due to external shocks, and position the Mission as a comprehensive transition support system rather than a technical farming program alone.

6.3 Establish frontline risk-flagging and rapid response systems to detect and address transition bottlenecks in real time

Context (Why?)	Frontline workers often observe emerging risks early, but currently lack formal channels to escalate concerns or trigger timely support, resulting in delayed or fragmented responses.
Action (What?)	NMNF should establish simple risk-flagging and response protocols for Krishi Sakhis, CRPs, and district teams to report emerging risks and activate rapid technical or institutional support.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	Real-time risk intelligence will enable faster corrective action, strengthen farmer trust, and prevent small disruptions from becoming exit points from natural farming adoption.

7. Harmonize the interventions of complementary departments to deliver NMNF effectively on the ground

NMNF's success at scale will depend on how effectively multiple government departments and delivery systems work in coordination at the district and block levels. Agriculture, NRLM, KVKs, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, and MGNREGA each control critical pieces of the transition ecosystem, yet their efforts often operate in parallel rather than as an integrated pathway for farmers. Harmonizing mandates, timelines, delivery channels, and accountability mechanisms can transform fragmented support into a coherent transition journey for smallholder farmers.

7.1 Formalise inter-departmental coordination mechanisms with clear roles for NMNF delivery and review

Context (Why?)	Natural farming transition requires synchronized support across inputs, training, credit, water, and livelihoods. In the absence of formal coordination, farmers receive piecemeal interventions that do not align with crop cycles or transition needs.
Action (What?)	Establish district- and block-level NMNF coordination platforms involving Agriculture, NRLM, KVK, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, and MGNREGA, with defined roles, shared transition calendars, and joint progress reviews.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	This would convert parallel departmental efforts into a unified transition support system, improving continuity of handholding, reducing duplication, and strengthening accountability for farmer-level outcomes.

7.2 Leverage NRLM platforms (SHGs, FPOs, Krishi/Pashu Sakhis) as delivery channels for NMNF beyond trainings

Context (Why?)	NRLM institutions already have deep community presence, especially among women farmers, but are often limited to livelihoods or awareness roles rather than structured NMNF delivery.
Action (What?)	Formally integrate SHGs, FPOs, and Sakhi cadres into NMNF input distribution, follow-up support, peer learning, and transition tracking—moving them from peripheral to core delivery partners.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	This would significantly strengthen last-mile reach, improve women's participation, and embed NMNF within trusted community institutions that can sustain transition beyond departmental touchpoints.

7.3 Synchronise subsidies, training schedules, and eligibility norms across departments to support full transition cycles

Context (Why?)	Misaligned training calendars, subsidy windows, and eligibility criteria often disrupt farmers' ability to access timely support during key transition stages.
Action (What?)	Align NMNF training, irrigation, livestock, compost unit subsidies, and input support schedules with cropping cycles and phased transition pathways through joint planning.
Possible Augmentation for NMNF (So what?)	This would ensure farmers receive the right support at the right time, reduce friction in accessing schemes, and improve the likelihood of sustained adoption across multiple seasons.

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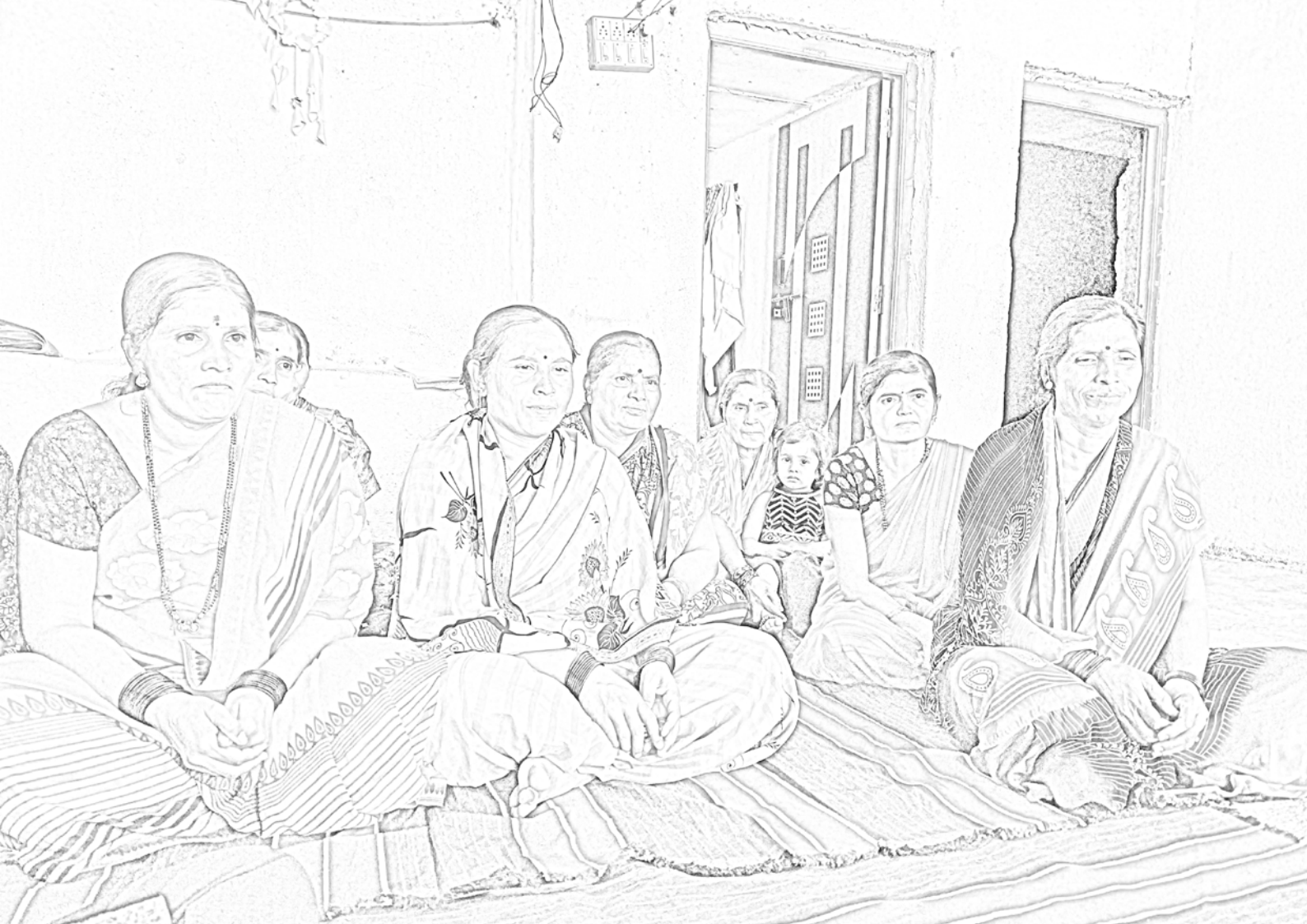
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