



सत्यमेव जयते  
ग्रामीण विकास मंत्रालय  
भारत सरकार



# NUTRI-GARDENS

## Facilitator Guide for SHG Meetings



**Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)**  
Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India



## Dear Facilitator

This facilitator guide on “**Nutri-Gardens**”, is designed to help all facilitators under State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs) in rolling out the Flipbook and disseminating key messages within the SHG groups and other community cadres. This session is part of a training package on Food, Nutrition, Health and WASH (FNHW) consisting of Flip books, Facilitator guides, Posters, Counselling Cards and Stickers.

The goal of this training on Nutrition Garden is to empower SRLM staff, cadres and community at large with the knowledge to understand the significance and benefits of nutrition garden at their homes and points to remember before setting up nutrition garden. This knowledge may consequently help to adopt better behaviour and practices that will improve the nutritional and health status of the family. We all know that better health and nutrition results in higher productivity leading to reduction in poverty and improvement in quality of life.

It should be kept in mind that this orientation package, although meant for SHG women, should serve as reference material for the entire family. Information provided under each session through flipbooks and this guide should be seen as collective learning for the family and each member of the family needs to play their part to ensure that the messages are adopted by them in everyday lives.

The responsibility of getting these behaviors imbibed does not lie with women only, the men/husbands/older boys in the family need to ensure making arrangements for whatever is required to follow these practices on FNHW.

### Objectives

**After going through the module, the facilitator will be able to:**

- Explain the participants about the significance of nutrition garden and its benefits.
- Understand the points to remember while setting up a nutri-garden.

### Initiate the Session

What we all need to know is that intake of cereals, pulses, fruits and vegetables provides nutrition to our body and sustain our health. Fruits and vegetables are an essential part of our daily diet and are mandatory to be consumed every day for optimum dietary diversity. Vegetables supply essential vitamins and minerals for building immunity and good health. A well-planned nutrition garden provides seasonal fruits and vegetables for the family and for the whole year.



Pregnant, lactating mother and children needed nutritious food to maintain good health. With the help of nutri-garden at home they could be provided nutritious food. Having a nutri-garden at home will reduce the daily expenses for the family on buying fruits and vegetables.

Cultivation of these crops by gardening in a systematic manner in small pieces of land available in households is known as "Nutrition Garden". The nutrition garden ensures access to healthy diet with adequate micronutrients at doorstep.

### Case Study

Asha was leading a healthy life in Badli village with her husband, mother in-law and 19 months old daughter Veera. Recently her distant aunt visited their house. Aunt was watching Asha giving her child Veera boiled rice water and potatoes for lunch. Looking at Veera grown weaker, aunt asked Asha as to why is she not feeding the child good nutritious food needed for her growth at this particular time. Asha answered that she could not find much fruits or vegetables in the market and those were available, were expensive. Aunt then suggested Asha that there is a sufficient land available back at their home and why did she not attempt to grow needed fruits and vegetables and set up a nutri-garden. Aunt also added SHG women helped each family in her village to set their own nutri-garden in the space available. Answer the following questions:

- ▶ Why is consumption of fruits and vegetables necessary?
- ▶ What do you understand by nutri-garden?

**Note:** Do not provide answers here, just listen to what they have to say.

### Step 1:

Initiate discussions with the group on nutri-gardens and ask the members to share their experiences of having tried to establish kitchen gardens in their homes or open space around their houses.

This session will provide information on:

- What is a nutri-garden?
- What are the benefits of nutri-garden?
- How can a nutri-garden be set up?

### Step 2:

Ask all the participants to share their understanding on nutri-garden or kitchen garden and highlight the discussion points writing on a paper/white board

## What do we understand by nutri-garden?

- Nutri-Garden means growing seasonal vegetables and fruits in and around your house, based on available space.
- Usually 3-5 types of seasonal fruits and vegetables can be grown in the nutri-garden such as Papaya, Guava, Pumpkin, green leafy vegetables such as Spinach, Fenugreek, etc.
- A nutri-garden can be set up on a piece of land as small as 20 x 20 feet or even smaller.
- Requirements of vegetables and fruits for a small family can sometimes be fulfilled by this nutri-garden at home.



### Step 3:

Ask all the participants to share their understanding on why do we set nutri-garden or kitchen garden and highlight the discussion points writing on a paper/ white board.

## Why should we have nutri-garden?

- The food we eat is divided into groups such as cereals, pulses, eggs, meats, fruits and vegetables, etc. based on the key nutrients that they provide.
- It is to be ensured that key nutrient requirements for the day are met through the food we eat by including at least five food groups in a day's menu.
- Seasonal fruits and vegetables obtained from the nutri-garden can fulfil the need of nutritious diet and dietary diversity of a family, especially pregnant, lactating women and young children throughout the year.
- There are a number of fruits and vegetables that can be grown in every season, depicted in the picture.
- Fruits and vegetables from the nutri-garden at home can also reduce everyday expenses on food items substantially.

Every family, even landless labourers, can grow nutritious vegetables. It is easy and very rewarding: you will save money, improve your diet, and avoid eating pesticide-tainted vegetables often sold in the market. Depending upon the size of land available, small, medium and large nutri-gardens can be set up and accordingly seasonal fruits and vegetables can be grown in them (refer below table). Some vegetables can also be grown well in pots or containers placed on sunny terraces, window ledges, balconies, verandahs, or on the roofs.





## Table: Vegetable crops for different seasons

In northern parts of India, there are three distinct seasons for growing vegetables. The following lists the vegetables suited to each season.

Winter (October–February)	Summer (March–June)	Rainy season (July–October)
Potato, cauliflower, cabbage, knol-khol, broccoli, carrots, Brussels sprouts, kale, radish, turnip, carrot, beetroot, onion, garlic, leek, broad bean, lettuce, parsley, celery, peas, spinach, fenugreek, mustard, coriander, fennel.	Okra, cowpea, cluster bean, tomato, eggplant, chill), capsicum, garden bean, pumpkin, bitter gourd, bottle gourd, luffa, cucumber, melons, amaranth, colocasia, asparagus.	Okra, cowpea, clusterbean, chill), eggplant, tomato, capsicum, cucurbit vegetables (except melons), radish, tumip, carrots, sweet potato. colocasia.
		

### Step 4:

Discuss with all the participants to share their understanding on the points to remember while setting up nutri-garden along with points to remember on their benefits to their family and highlight the discussion points writing on a paper/white board.

### Points to consider while setting up a nutrition garden

- For the nutri-garden, it is necessary to have proper watering arrangements and organic manure.
- To make the soil more fertile, use manure prepared at home, cow dung or compost etc.
- A lot of items available at home such as dry leaves, cow dung, vegetable peels, fruit waste, etc. can be easily used to prepare manure.
- Use household waste water for irrigation by channelling water from kitchen sink, etc. to the nutri-garden.

- It is also important to clean the garden and remove weeds from around the plants regularly.
- A small space in the corner of the garden can be used for protection of seeds and transplants, that can be of use next year.
- For more information on setting up nutri garden, contact Livelihood CRP of your area.



### **Key point to remember**

- Every house should own a kitchen garden because it can be made with small investment.
- Diversity is essential in a nutrition garden which will have at least 2-3 variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables in a harvest.
- One could get variety and nutritious food needed for the body from their kitchen garden with greens, seasonal fruits, and vegetables throughout the year.

### **Important points for laying out and planning your nutrition garden**

- ▶ Your nutri-garden will need plenty of sunlight.
- ▶ Rectangular gardens are better than square gardens, but any shape will do.
- ▶ Avoid the shade of big trees.
- ▶ Locate near a water source if possible.
- ▶ Vegetables which lose their quality and freshness rapidly after harvest, such as spinach, amaranth, fenugreek, mint, and radish, should be given priority in the garden.
- ▶ Plant root crops along the ridges which separate plant beds.
- ▶ Climbing vegetables make good use of space. Train them up fences, walls, or grew them on terraces.
- ▶ Dig one or two compost pits in a shady, unused corner of your plot.
- ▶ Farm yard manure and compost are great fertilizers for vegetable gardens. Mix them in the soil about a week before sowing or transplanting.



## ■ ■ Role of Self Help Group

- ▶ The SHG members should ensure that all households, especially with pregnant/lactating women and young children set up nutri-gardens in their houses.
- ▶ It should be ensured that all SHG members and their families understand important considerations to set up the garden and what fruits and vegetables can be grown in different seasons.
- ▶ The SHG groups should ensure registering the group for receiving training organized by VOs on Nutri-Gardens.

**Note:** The Self Help Group should be ready to support those members who face problems or find it difficult to convey these messages and convince their families.

Session concludes: End the session by revisiting the questions from the case study and their answers. Thank the participants and close.



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