

PRESS RELEASE

Food and Land Use Coalition India launches docufilm on role of women in sustaining and promoting millets

Film commemorates International Year of Millets 2023, led by India

New Delhi, 12th December 2023: In celebration of International Year of Millets, spearheaded by India, Food and Land Use Coalition India launched a short docufilm 'Invisible: Women and the Future of Millets' yesterday. The women who feature in the film – farmers and Self-Help Group members – were present during the screening and interacted with the audience, sharing their experiences and insights. Ms Martine Aamdal Bottheim, Deputy Head of Mission, Norway Embassy in India and Mr S Vijay Kumar, FOLU India Lead were also present on the occasion, along with several other key personalities from the sector.

The film which has been co-created with Native Picture, directed by Arjun Swaminathan, captures the intricate relationship that women farmers have with millets through generations. The film is a compelling narrative of the journey of millets from being a lost cause to a superfood, as well as the recognition of the labour put in by women farmers from all sections of the society - especially the marginalised communities. With efforts towards gender inclusivity, modernisation of the processing aspects, and newfound awareness around the nutritional benefits of millets, further supported by social media, the film shows how their lives of these women are changing. Through interactions with on-ground workers, sectoral experts, and government officials, the film attempts to gauge what more needs to be done to make this transition even more meaningful and beneficial to all stakeholders involved.

Mr S Vijay Kumar shared in his address: When we look at millets for the future, we should see what are the socio-economic policies which can favour millets in the right context. We also need to leverage new technologies based on R&D outcomes related to crop, pests, resource use efficiency, etc. This will help to increase the socio-economic feasibility of millets within a production system that favours diverse diets and provides nutrition security.

Mr KM Jayahari, FOLU India Country Coordinator remarked: "As we celebrate International Year of Millets, this film highlights one very important aspect, that of the responsibilities borne by women in the production and processing of millets. It sends out a clear message that while aiming for further expansion and intensification of millet production, adding to their burden of work should be avoided at all costs."

An interaction with the cast of the film was followed by a panel discussion titled 'Women of Influence: Discussion with Changemakers', which included Ms Mamta Borgoyary, Co-Director, SHE Changes Climate; Ms Shubhada Deshmukh, Co-founder, Amhi Amchya Arogyasathi; and Dr. Shweta Khandelwal, Senior Advisor, Nutrition, JHPIEGO India Country office. The session was moderated by Dr. Ruchika Singh, Executive Programme Director, WRI India.



Dr. Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI; Ajay Vir Jakhar, FOLU Ambassador; Dr. Sabyasachi Das, National Coordinator, RRAN; And Dr. Seth Cook, Asia-Pacific Coordinator, FOLU as moderator formed the panel on 'Reflections from FOLU Core Partners and Ambassador'.

About Food and Land Use Coalition India

The Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) is a global community of country platforms, partner organizations and Ambassadors working to advance sustainability, equity and resilience in food and land use systems. Created in 2017, FOLU supports diversity, embraces disruptive thinking and forges consensus through an evidence-based approach. The coalition empowers farmers, policymakers, businesses, investors and civil society to unlock collective action at scale. The FOLU Coalition in India includes the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture Network (RRAN), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and WRI India, and with a detailed integrated country modelling effort, led by the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIM-A) with support from International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-arid and Tropics (ICRISAT). [Know more about FOLU here.](#)

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