

## ***Upliftment of Small Farm Holders Community Affected by Covid – 19 Pandemic through Sustainable Livelihoods – Successful venture of Mrs. Sangita Balasahed Giranje, Gorepandal Village, Pune***

Mrs. Sangita of Gorepandal village in Bhor Taluk Pune belong to a farming family whose main source of income comes from the crops they grow such paddy, soyabean, wheat and chilli. They used to sell their produce directly and earn low profits. She wanted to improve her income by adding value to her raw produce, but did not know how to go about it. National Agro Foundation through its Partner BNYM was working on improving the lives and livelihoods of farmers during the pandemic and providing them with financial assistance to undertake various micro enterprises in order to strengthen the local economy.

NAF encouraged the farmers to form farmer clubs to avail of the benefits of knowledge sharing and financial literacy. The club members decided to undertake an entrepreneurship activity to support its members through a chilli processing unit. NAF supported the group with technical knowledge and skills to run the machinery and through financial support, helped the group establish a chilli processing unit



It was common knowledge that people used to travel far distances to grind their chilli and others would buy ready made commercial chilli powder, which often was adulterated with fillers. As a first step in the right direction, the group informed all the community members of their decision to buy a chill processing machine and requested them to avail of the service of processing their chilli produce through the

unit. They ground the chilli in the presence of the farmers and charged only INR 35 compared to INR45 per kilogram in other areas. Slowly, and steadily, the customers kept piling on and the processing unit processed nearly 502 Kgs of Chilli and earned an income INR17,570 during just three months. The group is excited to this new business venture and is looking forward to expanding by making their own chilli masala packets and sell it in the retail market.



This initiate and support from NAF and BNYM have given the community hope even in the pandemic and they are very grateful for the support in nurturing and improving their livelihoods.