

FORMAT FOR WOMEN INNOVATORS IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEM

Title: “From Subsistence to Sustainability: The Journey of a Women Farmer Leader”

5. Profile:

Name: Ms. Anita Roy

Age: 47 years

Education: Bachelor of Arts (Hindi)

Enterprise: SHREE MYTHILI ENTERPRISES (Banana-based food products & banana fibre handicrafts)

Village: Banraha Pachim Patti, Seorahi

District / State: Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh

Background/ Situation Analysis

Ms. Anita Roy and her husband were actively exploring suitable entrepreneurial opportunities that could ensure sustainable income, particularly leveraging Anita’s strong skills in culinary arts and food processing. Initially, they ventured into banana cultivation, as Kushinagar is a major banana-producing district with favourable agro-climatic conditions. However, they soon realised that farmers in the region largely depended on selling raw banana fruits, facing unstable prices, limited buyers and weak market linkages. A significant portion of the banana plant such as the pseudostem, flower, peel and core was routinely discarded as waste, resulting in low overall returns.

Catalysts of Change

A major turning point in Ms. Anita Roy’s entrepreneurial journey came with the launch of the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme by the Government of Uttar Pradesh, under which banana fibre and banana-based products were identified as the focus enterprise for Kushinagar district. This policy intervention provided the much-needed direction and confidence to transform her idea into a viable agri-enterprise.

To strengthen her technical capabilities, Ms. Anita Roy underwent specialised hands-on training at the ICAR–National Research Centre for Banana (NRCB), Tiruchirapalli, where she acquired knowledge and skills in banana fibre extraction and processing of banana-based food products. Further, to enhance the quality and market appeal of fibre products, she received advanced training in weaving and dyeing technology at the Ministry of Textiles, Chennai and Salem. Throughout her journey, continuous handholding and institutional support from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK),



Kushinagar played a crucial role. The KVK facilitated capacity building through trainings, provided exposure through exhibitions and Krishi Melas, and supported wide publicity via mass media platforms.

Pathway(s) to Progress

Ms. Anita Roy established Shree Mythili Enterprises in 2018 under the brand name “Karpura”, marking a strategic shift from primary banana production to value-added agri-processing. Through process innovation, the enterprise successfully developed six value-added banana-based food products, including banana chips, ready-to-serve (RTS) banana juice, pickles prepared from banana flower, stem and peel, banana flour, and banana vermicelli. In parallel, Ms. Roy diversified the enterprise by introducing banana fibre-based handloom and handicraft products, thereby creating a circular and zero-waste production model. With technical support from ICAR–National Research Centre for Banana (NRCB), she promoted the cultivation of diversified banana varieties such as Red Banana and Nendran in Kushinagar, challenging the prevailing perception that only G-9 varieties were suitable for the region. This intervention helped expand varietal choice and improved farmers’ income potential.

- Established Shree Mythili Enterprises (2018) under the brand “Karpura”, focusing on banana-based value addition and fibre products
- Converted banana waste marketable food products and handicrafts, promoting a zero-waste circular economy model
- Annual income increased from ₹5.91 lakh (2023–24) to gross income of ₹12.00 lakh and net income of ₹5.00 lakh (2024–25)
- Created sustainable employment for 40–50 rural women

Productivity & income enhancement:

For market expansion, the enterprise adopted multi-channel marketing strategies, including direct-to-consumer (D2C) and business-to-consumer (B2C) models, participation in exhibitions and fairs, establishment of a retail outlet at Gorakhpur Zoo, and use of digital and social media platforms. As a result of these innovations and scaling efforts, the enterprise recorded a significant increase in income, rising from ₹5.91 lakh during 2023–24 to ₹7.44 lakh in 2024–25. During 2024–25, the gross income reached ₹12.00 lakh, with a net income of ₹5.00 lakh.

Social/Personal Empowerment/Awards & Recognition:

Ms. Anita Roy received strong institutional support under the Nari Shakti and One District One Product (ODOP) initiatives, which significantly strengthened her entrepreneurial journey. In recognition of her technical competence, leadership qualities and contribution to banana-based value addition, she was designated as the

ODOP District Master Trainer, enabling her to guide and mentor other aspiring entrepreneurs in the district. Her enterprise has emerged as a major source of women-led employment, currently providing regular livelihood opportunities to 40–50 rural women, with a clear vision to scale this number to 200 women in the coming years. Beyond direct employment, Ms. Roy has played a pivotal role in capacity building, having trained more than 500 women in banana processing and banana fibre-based product development.

Awards / certificates / recognition received

- She is the recipient of the NRCB Best Entrepreneur Award (2023), the Shakti Sankalp Sanman (2024) by Jagriti Enterprises, and accolades from Hindustan Agency and Prithvipur Thejasvitha Sanmar. Her story has been featured in prominent media such as DD Channel, APN News, and Dainik Jagan.
- To increase production capacity, she secured grant support of Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 2 lakhs from Jagriti Enterprise Center and Avishkar Foundation respectively.

Influence to Other Farmers

Anita Roy's enterprise has inspired banana growers to adopt whole-plant utilisation, shift towards sustainable value addition, and explore women-led agri-enterprises, contributing to income diversification and circular agriculture in the region.



Picture 1: Banana and its by-products launched by Shree Mythili enterprises



Picture 2: Stories published in print media about the Shree Mythili Enterprises



Picture 3: Mrs. Anita Roy received financial grant support of Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 2 lakhs from Jagriti Enterprise Center and Avishkar Foundation



Picture 4: NRCB Best Entrepreneur Award (2023), Shakti Sankalp Sanman (2024)



Picture 5: Exhibitions at Krishi Mela by Mrs. Anita Roy representing shree Mythili enterprises



Picture 6: Ms. Anita showing her products to honourable chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath



Picture 7: Ms. Anita leading awareness lecture on use of banana and its by-products as business opportunities



Picture 8: Anita Roy is processing banana products with the self-help group women