

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

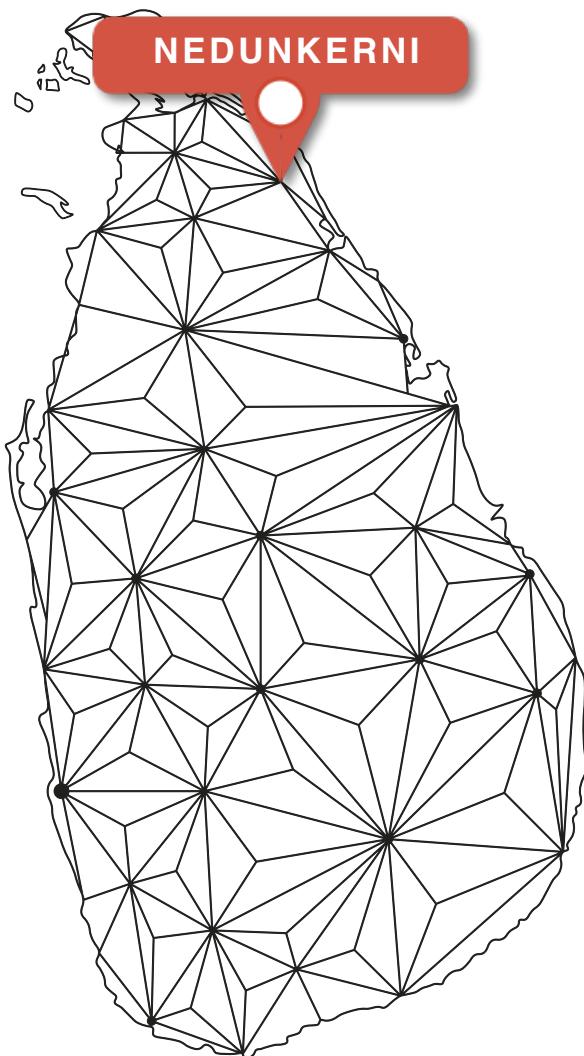
RAJKUMAR'S JOURNEY

Introduction

Rajkumar's adoption of modern agricultural practices has boosted his productivity and strengthened his farm's resilience. With healthier crops and increased yields, he's now better prepared to face future challenges, ensuring a secure future for his family.

Rajkumar has been dedicated to agriculture since 2003. With a strong commitment to farming, he has continually adapted to new methods and technologies to enhance productivity. Over the past four years, Rajkumar has significantly benefited from the support provided by DevPro, which has helped transform his agricultural practices. Four years ago, Rajkumar received assistance from DevPro aimed at agricultural development. This support included multiple training sessions on modern farming techniques and exposure to agricultural exhibitions showcasing the latest innovations. The training sessions and exhibitions introduced Rajkumar to advanced farming practices, including crop netting, which he has since integrated into his operations.



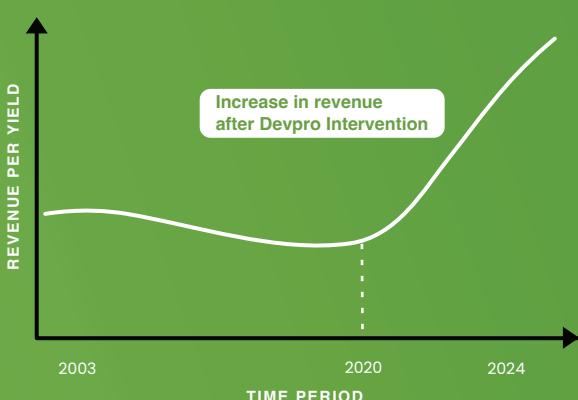


DevPro's Impact on Rajkumar's Achievements

Additionally, DevPro provided the necessary equipment to implement these techniques effectively. Rajkumar primarily cultivates papaya and brinjal on his 6-acre farm, which also includes sections with coconut trees and dairy cows producing 20 liters of milk daily. His brinjal varieties include Raveena, which is mainly supplied to Cargills, and Vari, which is distributed to Colombo and Dambulla. Local vendors and private companies often purchase directly from Rajkumar, making it financially viable by reducing transportation costs.

Adoption of New Technologies

To enhance productivity, Rajkumar has adopted various modern techniques. He uses water sprinklers for irrigation, significantly reducing water usage and labor costs. With this system, he can water the entire farm in just 30 minutes, compared to the traditional method that takes much longer. This innovation not only conserves water but also cuts down on labor expenses.



Market Awareness and Pricing Strategy:

Rajkumar emphasizes the importance of market awareness and price negotiation. He has a shop in Dambulla and is well-versed in the market prices there, enabling him to negotiate effectively with vendors. This knowledge helps him maximize his profits and ensures fair pricing for his produce.

21
YEARS IN
Agriculture

04
YEARS OF
DevPro Intervention

06
ACRES OF
Land

300KG
PAPAYA
Monthly Harvest

Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges for Rajkumar. The inability to transport products and the lack of a proper market led to substantial financial losses. Additionally, the movement restrictions affected the availability of workers and vendors. To mitigate these issues, Rajkumar obtained a pass and sold his produce in Mullaitivu, though not through proper markets.



Family Support and Workforce Management:

Rajkumar's family plays a crucial role in his farming operations. His wife and son, who recently completed his O/Levels, assist part-time. When necessary, Rajkumar hires 2-3 additional workers. Despite having help, Rajkumar remains hands-on, ensuring that all tasks are performed meticulously to prevent issues such as pest infestations and nutrient loss to wild plants.

Future Plans and Crop Diversification :

Looking ahead, Rajkumar plans to venture into chili cultivation using the latest netting techniques. This expansion reflects his ongoing commitment to adopting modern agricultural methods to boost productivity and profitability.

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Embracing new technologies and methods in farming has been crucial for my success. Thanks to the support and training from DevPro, I've been able to significantly improve my productivity and adapt to changing market conditions.

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Rajkumar's journey in agriculture illustrates the transformative impact of adopting modern farming techniques. Before DevPro's support, he faced challenges with outdated methods that hindered productivity and made him vulnerable to market and environmental shifts. With DevPro's training and resources, Rajkumar enhanced his farming efficiency, gained confidence, and successfully navigated challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, ultimately securing a brighter future for his family and serving as an inspiration to other farmers.

About DevPro:

DevPro is an independent not for profit organization with the vision of 'A world where development is in service of equality'. DevPro is built on the 30 years' delivery and legacy of Oxfam in Sri Lanka. Company's work revolves around Climate Resilient Inclusive Economic Development in the areas of Agriculture, Tourism, Climate, Tech and Education, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH). DevPro currently has 5 regional offices with its head office situated in Colombo, Sri Lanka. DevPro's overarching mission is to create Inclusive Economic Development and the approach adapted would mainly be Market System Development (MSD) in the main pillars the company would work on.

About RIES (Resilient & Gender Inclusive Enterprise System):

The RIES project is built to focus on agriculture-based enterprise's development, women's economic inclusion and engagement with the private sector. There is an increased focus on improving access for farmers and small and medium enterprises to national and international markets, providing opportunity for value adding and increased prices for products.