



A DAY IN AN ORGANIC FARM

CIKS had organised a one day educational visit for a group of 21 members to the Sukkankollai farm on 24th April. This was organised as a part of the NTT Data Project to create awareness about organic farming and farmer's lives amongst the general public. After a brief introduction about the farm and the activities, participants got into action with a number of activities in the farm. Participants were taken around to the demonstration units on biogas preparation, vermicompost preparation, mushroom cultivation, *azolla* cultivation and were briefed about various procedures involved in it. They were given an opportunity to sow vegetable seeds, prepare pot mixture for planting saplings and to harvest groundnut. They were treated with a delightful organic lunch cooked by the women's group of farmers based in Sirkazhi.



Participants Involved in Seed Sowing

BUYER - SELLER MEET FOR FARMER PRODUCER COMPANIES

CIKS had organised a Buyer - Seller Meet for Farmer Producer Companies in Trichy on 12th April. The major objective of this workshop was to provide an opportunity for the Directors and the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the Producer Companies to interact with the representatives of major companies dealing with agricultural products. This workshop was attended by 80 participants, representing the Producer Companies (Directors and CEOs), officials from the Department of Agriculture, Department of Agri-Marketing & Agri-Business, NABARD, TNSFAC and Private Companies.



Participants in the Buyer - Seller Meet



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

Improving the Livelihood and Food Security of Small-Holder Tribal Communities

Project activities are in progress in the Jawadhu hills block of Thiruvannamalai district covering 847 beneficiary households and 360.5 acres with the support of NABARD. This includes current year's 27 beneficiary households with 25 acres of land. Under WADI (small orchards) component, a variety of fruit and tree crops have been cultivated in 335.5 acres. Under the component on other livelihood activities, 213 beneficiaries are implementing the livelihood activities like rearing of cows, goats and pigs, tailoring unit, petti - shops, fodder cultivation and bee keeping. A total of 59 beneficiaries have purchased milch animals with the support of FWWB, Ahmedabad. A tractor has been purchased under this programme and is being used by the beneficiaries. Construction of little millet processing unit, oil expeller unit and storage godown are in progress in Seramarathur village. Managiri Sustainable Agriculture Producer Company Limited is operating with a total of 298 shareholders. Representative farmers participated in a "Buyer - Seller Meet" for FPOs organized in Trichy on 12th April.

DST Core Supported Project

Under this project supported by DST, New Delhi, 75 indigenous varieties of paddy seeds have been multiplied for seed conservation in Nagapattinam district. Regular production is in progress in the neem oil soap unit, biofertilizer unit and mushroom production unit. An experiment on "Testing the efficacy of neem oil

soap and neem and pungam oil mixed soap against sucking pests in Bhendi" has been completed. Two technical training programmes on organic pest and disease management and biopesticide production were conducted for the shareholders of Koodaloor and Cuddalore FPOs. Members of four women's groups from Karaikal were trained on sustainable agriculture practices and input production on 15th June. The project staff attended a two day training on biofertilizer production technology on 21st - 22nd June at MSSRF in Kannivadi, Dindigul district. Under institution building, trainings on maintenance and regulatory aspects of FPOs were conducted for the farmers of Ariyaloor, Koodaloor and Thiruvarur.

Strengthening of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)

This project is being implemented in Cuddalore, Thiruvannamalai, Nagapattinam and Thanjavur districts of Tamil Nadu with the support of Tamil Nadu Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (TNSFAC). Efforts to strengthen Cuddalore District Mangalore Millets Farmer Producer Company Limited and Rajaraja Chozhan Farmers Producer Company Limited in Cuddalore and Thanjavur districts are in progress. 178 Farmers' Interest Groups (FIGs) have been formed. 54 Local Resource Persons are in place and helping out in the project implementation. In Nagapattinam and Thiruvannamalai districts, Veera Chozhan Farmers Producer Company Ltd., and Thenpennai Farmers Producer Company Ltd.,

have been incorporated, respectively. In all the four districts village level meetings, technical trainings to CEOs and BoDs, demonstrations and need assessment exercises were organized. Mr. Y. Milton from Monitoring and Evaluation Team of SFAC, Chennai visited the FPOs in Thanjavur and Nagapattinam on 29th and 30th April and had discussion with the Board of Directors about the current activities of the FPOs. CIKS staff, Ms. Subhashini Sridhar and Dr. Vijay Subbiah visited ICAR Institute of Onion and Garlic Research in Pune on 12th May and had discussion with Dr. Pranjali and Dr. Kalyani, Head, Department of Post Harvest Technology about post harvest and storage techniques of onion. A retail input shop has been opened in *Uzhavar Sandhai* in Thanjavur on 17th June. In Nagapattinam district, farmers' field day - black gram cultivation demonstration was done on 17th June with the participation of 165 farmers and officials from NABARD, TNAU (Tamil Nadu Agricultural University) and TRRI (TamilNadu Rice Research Institute).

Promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations in Tamil Nadu - POPI Programme

This project is being implemented under the NABARD Producer Organization Development Fund (PODF) scheme. A total of 3855 beneficiaries from 45 panchayats are part of this project. A total of 216 Farmers' Interest Groups (FIGs) have also been formed. Ten Farmer Producer Companies (FPOs) have been promoted in Kancheepuram, Dindigul, Thiruvannamalai and

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more.

Ramanathapuram districts. A total of 3383 shareholders are part of these FPOs. A total of 98 orientation trainings were organised in the project villages. On 12th April, a buyer - seller meet was organized by CIKS at Trichy. Representatives of BoDs and CEOs of all the FPOs under this project participated and got trained on market requirements, quality standards, value addition etc. An exposure visit was organized for the selected farmers to the CIKS Organic Research Farm in Sukkankollai village of Kancheepuram district and to the Marutham Sustainable Agriculture Producer Company Limited in Thiruvannamalai district to learn the technologies related to sustainable agriculture, business strategies and billing procedures. Two one-day training programmes on "Sustainable Agriculture Technologies for Groundnut Cultivation" have been conducted for the beneficiaries of Chengam, Thandampet and Pudupalayam FPOs in Thiruvannamalai district. On 2nd June, a training programme on "Strategic Planning for APCs" has been organized for the CEOs of the Producer Companies under this programme at Asha Nivas in Chennai.

Capacity Building for Adoption of Technologies (CAT) Programme - Honey Bee Rearing

This is a NABARD supported programme on Honey Bee Rearing implemented in Vedharanyam taluk of Nagapattinam district. A total of 26 farmers from Vedharanyam block were trained on the "Technology of Honey Bee Rearing and Value Addition" at Vibis Nature Honey Bee Farm in Madurai on 1st and 2nd April. Farmers were provided with practical and class room sessions on various aspects of this technology including - setting up boxes, feeding, smoking and collecting honey. As a part of this training, participants were taken to visit the Alanganallur honey bee farm. As a follow up to this training, farmers are planning to start a honey bee rearing unit in Katharipulam village of Nagapattinam district.

Lectures at IIT, Gandhi Nagar

The Indian Institute of Technology (Gandhi Nagar) near Ahmedabad organised a course on "Indian Knowledge Systems" during the period January - April 2016. As part of this course A.V. Balasubramanian delivered a set of four lectures on 4th and 5th of April. The topics of the lectures were "Indigenous Knowledge of Agriculture: The Contents and Richness of Science and Technology" and "The Nature and Social Organisation of Knowledge".

Meetings at Ahmedabad

On 6th April, A.V. Balasubramanian had a series of meetings at various institutions in Ahmedabad. He visited Ms. Vijayalakshmi Das of FWWB (Friends of World Womens' Banking) and had discussions in connection with collaboration with CIKS. Later he visited the Centre for Management of Agriculture (CMA) at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad and had meetings with Prof. Sukhpal Singh about his work relating to Farmer Producer Companies and Prof. Anil Gupta about his work relating to innovation in the agriculture sector from the field. In the evening he also had a meeting with Mr. Dilip Surkar, Director, VIKSAT and his colleagues at the Centre for Environment Education (CEE) Ahmedabad on their activity relating to Sustainable Agriculture and FPOs.

Meetings on Producer Companies

On 6th May, Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi met the field coordinators of the CIKS team along with the Director A.V. Balasubramanian for a brainstorming session. Detailed discussions were held and strategies were evolved to improve the functioning of Producer Companies and their income.

On 10th May, Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi and A.V. Balasubramanian visited

Mr. Ashish Mondal of ASA, an NGO based in Bhopal which has promoted several Producer Companies and also in the process of federating them. They had a detailed discussion about the ways in which they operate, role of funding agencies in assisting them etc.

On 2nd June, a meeting of all the CEOs of the Producer Companies supported by NABARD under the POPI programme was held at Asha Nivas in Chennai. The current status of APCs and targets in terms of raising shareholders and business was discussed in detail. Types of support required from CIKS were also discussed.

DST Group Monitoring and Consultative Workshop

Between 13th and 15th May, DST Group Monitoring and Consultative Workshop was held in Pune. This workshop was jointly organized by DST and core groups viz. BAIF, ARTI and Vigyan Ashram, Pabal in Pune. On behalf of CIKS, Subhashini Sridhar and Dr. Vijay Subbiah participated and presented about the activities done under the Core support.

Meeting with Official from FWWB

On 12th June, A.V. Balasubramanian and a group of CEOs from three Producer Companies in Thiruvannamalai and Kancheepuram districts had a meeting with Ms. Vijayalakshmi Das from FWWB, Ahmedabad at CIKS TRC. The company representatives gave an outline of the business activities and future plans and Ms. Vijayalakshmi Das gave an overview of FWWB and there was discussion about future possibilities.

TALK TO US

Send your feed back,
comments and suggestions
to info@ciks.org

NEW PUBLICATIONS



We have brought out four new publications under the HIVOS Extension project. The titles are,

1. Good Practices for Producer Companies (in English)
2. *Urpathiyalar Companigalukkana Therndha Seyalmuraigal* (in Tamil)
3. Duties, Rights and Responsibilities: Manual for Shareholders, Directors & Chief Executive Officers of Producer Companies (in English) and
4. *Urpathiyalar Companigalin Vettrikkana Thittamidai mattrum Aalugai Murai* (in Tamil).

VISITOR'S BOOK

Who's been dropping in at CIKS

- On 11th April, Mr. Pema Doornenbal from The Netherlands, who had graduated from Wageningen University and interested in Sustainable Development and Farmers groups visited us.
- On 11th April, Mr. K. Sridhar and Ms. Krishna of the firm Akshaya Corporate Solutions visited us to discuss the work relating to "Building Capacities and Assessment of FPOs.
- On 19th April, A.V. Balasubramanian had a discussion with Mr. Sudhir Narayanan, Associate Director, CRISIL, Bengaluru and Mr. C. Muthiah, Senior Business Development Manager, Chennai, about the need for coming up with a tool / method for the assessment and rating of FPOs for their credit worthiness.
- On 5th May, A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi had a discussion with consultant Mr. Nitin Chordia about the preparation of a manual on retail marketing for APCs.
- On 19th May, A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi had a discussion with Dr. Ramasubramanian and Dr. Murugan of NAF (National Agro Foundation) about collaboration on various projects.
- On 22nd June, a meeting was held with Mr. Sathya, Mr. Ajith and Mr. Kaustav of NTT Data to review our farmer online platform work. The possibilities of crowd funding and the involvement of CIKS was discussed.

Editorial Team : Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi & R. Abarna

Design & Layout : R.Anand & S. Ramesh

Book-Post

To



CIKS

B-3, Rajalakshmi Complex,
2nd Floor, No. 18, Chamiers Road,
Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035

Ph : 044-4218 8011

Email : info@ciks.org / ciksorg@gmail.com

Website : www.ciks.org