



## CIKS CELEBRATES 21<sup>ST</sup> FOUNDATION DAY IN THE FARM

CIKS completed 21 years since registration in January this year. On 23<sup>rd</sup> January, all the CIKS team members from various field offices and Chennai assembled for a get together at the CIKS Technology Resource Centre in Sukkankollai. It was an occasion when the Chennai office was in the process of recovering from the devastating floods in December 2015 (see separate sheet for details) which had resulted in the complete loss of furniture, library, records, computers etc. It was also a period when farmers in many parts of Tamil Nadu were slowly recovering from heavy damage to crops as well as property. The day started with sharing and reflections from various team members about the nature of the loss, and efforts that were being made for restoration and reconstruction. It was an occasion to share and reflect on the events as well as thank various persons who had offered help and support. This was followed by reflections on the various achievements of the last year and plans and thoughts about the year to come. The institution was undergoing a lot of transition with the formation of several Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in the form of Agriculture Producer Companies which were providing the institutional frame work for continuation of the work in the field. This also posed several challenges by way of building up of capacities in acquiring new skills and changes of attitude required to successfully manage and lead the new institutions. After a session of reflection a broad consensus was achieved about the plan for the coming year. In the later part of the day the team members visited the Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary nearby.

### CIKS affected by floods and on the road to recovery

See separate sheet inside for details.....



*Cake Cutting by the Team of Farm Workers of  
CIKS Organic Research Farm*

### NEW PROJECTS AT CIKS

- NTT DATA Asia Pacific Pvt. Ltd., sanctioned a project for "Providing Online Knowledge Content and Conducting Offline Activities that Connects Farmers to the Market for Organic Sustainable Agriculture Produce" for a duration of six months from November 2015 onwards.
- NABARD has sanctioned a project on "Dissemination of Yield Increasing Techniques in Groundnut Cultivation through Sustainable Agricultural Practices" in Thiruvannamalai from February to October 2016.
- NABARD has identified CIKS as the Resource Support Agency (RSA) to offer training to POPIs (Producer Organisation Promoting Institutions) who are involved in promoting FPOs with the support of NABARD in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. This is a one year programme for the period April 2016 - March 2017.



## **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 702 beneficiary households and 335.5 acres with the support of NABARD. WADI (small orchards) fields are being maintained in 335.5 acres with variety of fruit and tree crops. Under the component on other livelihood activities, 209 beneficiaries are implementing the livelihood activities like rearing of cows, goats and pigs, tailoring unit, petti - shops, fodder cultivation and bee keeping. Millet processing unit and Agriculture Service Facilitation Centre (ASFC) are being utilized and maintained by the farmers' groups. Twenty nine awareness meetings on Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) were organised and an FPO named Managiri Sustainable Agriculture Producer Company Limited was incorporated on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Two two-day technical trainings have been conducted for the Board of Directors (BoDs) and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). Project monitoring committee meeting was held on 25<sup>th</sup> January at the NABARD office in Thiruvannamalai. A meeting of the CEOs was held at Thiruvannamalai on 24<sup>th</sup> February.

### **Women's Technology Park for Promoting Organic Agriculture**

This project is in progress in the districts of Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Nagapattinam, Ramanathapuram, Cuddalore and Karaikal with the support of DST. A total of 2623 women beneficiaries under 173 groups in 67 villages are part of this project. Beneficiaries are involved in organic seed production and fodder production. Sixteen community vermicompost units, 14 *azolla* production units and three mushroom production units are in place. Two community mushroom production units were also established in Nemmeli and Othavanthankudi villages of Nagapattinam district and production is in progress. Trainings on mushroom production were organized for 118 women farmers of Nagapattinam district. Exposure visits were also organised for the women farmers of Nagapattinam to Priyam Biotech in Thiruvarur and to the mushroom production unit in Nemmeli village to learn the techniques of mushroom cultivation. Four training programmes on the importance of various enterprises - milch animal rearing, vermicompost and biopesticide production and mushroom cultivation were conducted for the beneficiaries. A total of 1936 women beneficiaries under this project have become

the shareholders and selling their produce through Marutham and Valanadu Sustainable Agriculture Producer Company Ltd., in Thiruvannamalai and Nagapattinam districts and Cuddalore District Millet Farmers Producer Company Ltd. Mrs. Subhashini Sridhar along with two women beneficiaries attended a meeting of this project on 26<sup>th</sup> October organized by FRLHT at Bengaluru.

### **Promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations in Tamil Nadu - POPI Programme**

This project is being implemented under the NABARD Producer Organization Development Fund (PODF) scheme from January 2015. A total of 2581 beneficiaries from 39 panchayats are part of this project. A total of 192 Farmers' Interest Groups (FIGs) have also been formed. A total of 2026 shareholders have been selected. A series of orientation and technical trainings have been conducted for the farmers and for the Directors and CEOs of the FPOs, respectively. Three Sustainable Agriculture Producer Companies named Kanchi in Kancheepuram district and Seeds and Managiri in Thiruvannamalai district were inaugurated. An FPO named Thandrapet Sustainable Agriculture Producer Company

Limited was incorporated on 17<sup>th</sup> March in Thiruvannamalai district.

### **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 Agri-business Consortium (TNSFAC). Selected progressive farmers from Cuddalore Mangalore Millets FPO visited SPIC in Tuticorin between 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> October to learn the technologies related to fertilizer management and yield improvement in maize. This FPO has also been selected to implement a new venture called Krishi - PRIDE - E Platform with the help of TCS Chennai.

### **Enhancing Livelihood Security of Farmers through the Formation of Agriculture Producer Company**

This project is being implemented in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu with the support of PROCIF - Small Grants Fund, The Netherlands. A total of 500 beneficiaries including 278 women and 12 Village Agri Business Development Service Providers (VABDSPs) have been selected from 19 villages of Dindigul district. The Kurinji Sustainable Agriculture Producer Company Limited (KSAPCL) incorporated under this programme is functioning with a total of 402 shareholders. The First Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) was held on 9<sup>th</sup> October. Monthly meetings of the Board of Directors (BOD) were conducted regularly.

## **NEWSROOM**

*Happenings and more.*

### **Capacity Building Workshop**



A three day capacity building workshop for Producer Organizations was held between 29<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October at Chennai. Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officers and selected shareholders of 12 Producer Companies from different districts of Tamil Nadu participated in the workshop. They were trained on the aspects of compliance related issues, strategic planning, business plan preparation, retail marketing etc.

### **Workshop for Farmer Producer Companies**

NABARD had organized a workshop for providing exposure and training on various aspects of Management of Farmer Producer Companies on 7<sup>th</sup> January. The meeting was attended by the representatives of various Producer Companies that have been formed in Tamil Nadu with the support of NABARD and also by the resource agencies. On behalf of CIKS Director A. V. Balasubramanian and six other staff members participated in the workshop. A. V. Balasubramanian also made a presentation on "Good Practices for Producer Companies".

### **Knowledge Sharing Meeting and Discussion**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> February, A. V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi participated in a "Knowledge Sharing Meeting" with the employees of NTT Data office at Chennai. They were part of an expert panel which answered questions on the subject of healthy organic food. Mr. Sridhar from Ecologin was also part of the panel. Following this, they also

participated in a discussion meeting held in Mylapore, Chennai on 11<sup>th</sup> February. These meetings were coordinated by Mr. Madurantakam Sathya of NTT Data. Mr. Fukaya San, CEO, NTT Data Asia Pacific Region also participated. This was followed by an organic meal and discussion with the participants.

### **Discussion Meeting on "Selected Works of Dharampal"**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March, CIKS had organised a discussion meeting on the publication on "Selected Works of Dharampal" that had been brought out by the Publication Division of the Govt. of India. Sri. A.V. Balasubramanian of CIKS welcomed the gathering and Dr. Gita Dharampal (Head, Department of History, Institute of South Asian Studies, Heidelberg, Germany) who had edited the volume gave an overview of the publication. This was followed by a series of presentations from various persons who share their views about the importance of the work and the contributions of Sri. Dharampal towards understanding the nature and function of traditional Indian society. The speakers included - Dr. M.D. Srinivas (Centre for Policy Studies, Chennai), Dr. G. Sivaramakrishnan (National Law School of India University, Bengaluru), Dr. C.N. Krishnan (Anna University), Mr. Badri Seshadri (New Horizon Publications, Chennai), Mr. D. Ravikumar (Writer) and Mr. P.A. Krishnan (Writer). The presentations were followed by discussions. Suggestions were received and discussed about making some of the works of Sri. Dharampal available in Tamil.



## MAGALIR MELA - WOMENS' FESTIVAL



On 22<sup>nd</sup> March, a *Magalir Mela* on the theme of “Capturing the Market” was organized by CIKS Sirkazhi field office in Nagapattinam district with the financial support of NABARD, Chennai and HIVOS, The Netherlands. The prime objective of this event is to create awareness among women groups about the enterprise activities and scaling up of current women led activities. Members of 80 women Self Help Groups (SHGs) from Nagapattinam district participated in the event. Officials from NABARD, students and representatives from other organisations participated. SHGs excelling in different activities were given awards in the function.

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

## VISITOR'S BOOK Who's been dropping in at CIKS

- On 1<sup>st</sup> October, a group of 11 international members visited the CIKS Organic Research Farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 21<sup>st</sup> October, Mr. Gaurav Gupta from Ananya Finance, Ahmedabad visited the CIKS Organic Research Farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 5<sup>th</sup> January, Mr. Jaganath, Branch Manager, Indian Bank, Uthiramerur visited the CIKS Organic Research Farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 19<sup>th</sup> January, Justice A. Abdul Hadi (Former Judge, High Court of Madras) visited us to get to know about our activities.
- On 19<sup>th</sup> January, Mr. John Morris, Chartered Accountant visited us in connection with the professional services for APCs being supported by CIKS.
- On 20<sup>th</sup> January, Mr. Zho and Mr. Ranjit Singhvi from Tatami Agri Producer Company Limited in Dimapur, Nagaland visited us to get to know about the Formation and Administration of Producer Companies.
- On 26<sup>th</sup> January, a group of 12 CIKS well wishers visited the CIKS Organic Research Farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 3<sup>rd</sup> March, Ms. Vijayalakshmi Das, CEO of Ananya Finance and FWWB, Ahmedabad visited us for a discussion meeting.

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# CIKS AFFECTED BY FLOODS – ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

The CIKS registered office is located at Kotturpuram in a basement and we are close to the Adyar river - this is one of the areas that suffered most during the recent floods at Chennai in December 2015. The entire office which is in the basement was under water from the evening of 2<sup>nd</sup> December (Tuesday) till 9<sup>th</sup> December and we could start removing the material and attempt salvaging only from 9<sup>th</sup> December onwards. By the time the process could be completed the entire office was submerged under several feet of water for a period about a week. This has resulted in a serious, devastating and a near complete loss of all the materials in the office. All our computers, laptops as well as the files and papers, documents, accounts, library, furniture and stocks of all publications have been completely destroyed. We had a library of about 2000 books on various aspects of sustainable agriculture and Indian knowledge systems in addition to which there is a collection of - CDs, Ph.D. thesis, Census volumes, maps etc. - this entire collection is now lost.

## ***CIKS field stations in Tamil Nadu***

The TRC (Technology Resource Centre) and training facility in the village of Sukkankollai in the Kancheepuram district - has suffered heavy damage and we would have to undertake huge repairs. Severe damage was caused to the training centre, meeting hall, dormitory, guest house, laboratory, vermicompost unit, shade net house and various composting units. The standing crop was

damaged heavily. However, interestingly all the indigenous varieties of paddy survived to the extent that the germ plasm could be conserved.

## ***Donations and support received during the recovery from floods***

CIKS has received generous help and support from various sources during the process of recovery and restoration after the floods. Some of the highlights are as follows :

- Donations have been received from a variety of sources including - Trustees, well wishers, farmers groups, friends and relatives, CIKS staff and former staff including students who have worked with us. Besides individual donations there have also been some donations received from organisations.
- In addition, by the way of materials and equipment we have received many items including - computers, laptops, printers and scanners and furniture including tables, chairs, computer tables, conference table etc.
- A number of well wishers have volunteered and provided their time and expertise at various stages of recovery including - physical help during salvage of materials, help in restoration of documents etc.
- Several professionals have given their help and also offered to provide services to CIKS *pro bono*.

To us what has been as valuable and precious as the material

support extended has been the spontaneity and affection with which this help has been given. A large number of friends and well wishers told us that they considered the work being done by CIKS to be extremely valuable and something that should be continued for which they have offered generous help and assistance.

## ***Current status and new office location***

While there is still a long way to go, we are certainly making progress and we are on our way to recovery. Currently, we have reviewed and resumed various normal operations both in Chennai and in the field and we are back on track with respect to our academic work and commitments to various of our field activities and projects. We have also made plans for restoration and reconstruction.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude and thanks to all our friends and well wishers who have stood with us through this difficult period offering help and support.

The CIKS office has been shifted to a new location in Nandanam and the contact details are given below.

**- A.V. Balasubramanian,  
Director  
17th May 2016**

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