



IMPROVING THE LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY OF SMALL HOLDER TRIBAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH WADI MODEL AND INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

This project sanctioned by NABARD to our Centre is being implemented in the Jawadhu hills of Thiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu. The project is for a period of seven years from April 2013 onwards. Under this project, we are planning to improve the livelihood and food security of small-holder tribal families in 29 villages of Kovilur Panchayat through WADI (small orchard) model and by creating awareness on soil and water management practices, improved crop cultivation methods using organic practices, sustainable seed production system etc. Project staff attended the project orientation programme organized by NABARD in collaboration with the Bharathi Agro Industries Foundation in Gujarat. Following are the work carried out under this project so far,

- A total of 304 beneficiary households covering 150 acres from nine villages have been selected for the implementation of the project activities in the first year.
- Village level project orientation meetings and trainings have been conducted.
- Baseline details of the selected villages have been documented.
- Under the component of WADI (small orchard), activities like land marking, pit formation for fruit crops and border crops, identification of nurseries, procurement of saplings and other inputs are in progress.
- Analysis of soil samples collected from 150 acres of land is in progress.
- Breeder seeds of foxtail millet, pearl millet, kodo millet and barnyard millet have been procured from the Tamil Nadu Agriculture University for seed production and beneficiary selection for the same is in progress.
- The Project Monitoring Committee Meeting was held in Thiruvannamalai in May 2013 at NABARD District Development Office.



Project staff involved in the survey of available water bodies in the project villages

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE BENEFITS FARMERS

In Thiruvannamalai district, about 76 farmers who had adopted SRI method of paddy cultivation in 136 acres have reduced their cost of cultivation by Rs. 4000/- per acre. Similarly, in Nagapattinam district, 50 farmers who had cultivated groundnut have reduced their cost of cultivation by about Rs. 1000/- per acre. A total of 11 farmers in Thiruvannamalai and Nagapattinam districts reported an increase in the productivity of White Ponni rice and traditional variety of groundnut by 150 kgs/acre and 200 kg/acre, respectively.



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

Development and Field Testing of Biopesticidal Oils Formulated as Soaps - A Pilot Project in Tamil Nadu

This project supported by the Department of Science and Technology is in progress in Nagapattinam district. Bioassays have been conducted on *Spodoptera litura* and *Aphids* using neem oil soap solution, neem oil solution, Khadhi soap solution and Pongam oil soap solution. Experiments on "Testing the efficacy of Neem oil and Pongam oil soap on green gram crop", "Management of sucking pest in bhendi crop using neem oil soap", "Management of pests in brinjal using neem oil soap solution" and "Management of aphids using *Andrographis kashaayam* and *Annona kashaayam*" have been conducted. A pot experiment on "Management of mealy bugs in tomato crop" was conducted in collaboration with the Department of Entomology, Annamalai University during April - May 2013. Experiments on "Management of shoot and fruit borer in brinjal using neem oil soap solution" and "Management of pests in goose berry (Amla) tree using neem oil soap solution" are in progress. A total of four training programmes on preparation and usage of neem oil soap and various biopesticides have been conducted for the farmers of Nagapattinam and Thiruvannamalai districts. A neem oil soap production unit has been established in Ilayamadukoodam village and the unit is being maintained by the members of Chelliyamman womens' group.

Programme for Supporting Sustainable Organic Farming in Nagapattinam District of Tamil Nadu - Phase II

The second phase of this project supported by NABARD is in progress in the Sirkazhi taluk of Nagapattinam district. Under this project, 18 tonnes of traditional paddy varieties and value added products have been sold. A total of 3.1 tonnes of grains of traditional paddy varieties - *Kuzhiyadichan*, *Panankattukudaivazhai* and *Soorankuruwai* have been procured. An exhibition has

been organized between 4th - 6th April, at Pondicherry by Sirkazhi Organic Farmers' Association (SOFA) and Thugil in Chennai. We have participated in the Farmers' festival (*Uzhavar Peruvizha*) conducted as part of the awareness programme on government schemes in selected panchayats of Nagapattinam district in April and May 2013. We have participated in *Nel thiruvizha* (paddy festival) organized by CREATE in Thiruthuraipoondi, NABARD in Thiruvavur and THANAL in Kerala on 25th - 26th May in Aadhirengam village, Thiruthuraipoondi. On 17th June, members of SOFA participated in a training programme on coconut cultivation in Kathiripulam village organized by KVK in Sikkal, Nagapattinam and Coconut Research Station in Vepankulam, Thanjavur. On 22nd June, a one day consumer awareness programme was conducted at THAPAS, Pondicherry.

Comprehensive Pilot Programme for Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture

This pilot programme on strengthening rainfed agriculture is in progress in the Jawadhu hills block of Thiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu from June 2012 onwards with the financial support of Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) network of India. Seeds of millet varieties produced by the beneficiaries were procured and stored in the newly constructed seed bank in Seramarathur village. Organic kitchen gardens are being maintained by the beneficiaries. Seeds of four different millet varieties have been procured from Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, Coimbatore for the cultivation. Under the activities of Soil node, the situation analysis has been completed for four villages and 70 pits have been dug for the production of biomass based manure in three hamlets. A weather station has been installed in Seramarathur village through Water node. A training programme on biomass production was conducted for the beneficiaries in Seramarathur village.

A meeting on the theme of "Agriculture Marketing and Food Processing" was organized in the Jawadhu hills by the Agriculture Marketing Department on 16th April. On behalf of CIKS, five farmer beneficiaries from the Jawadhu hills participated in the meeting and explained about the activities of CIKS in Jawadhu hills area. The Annual Review Meeting of the project was held in Delhi on 7th - 8th June 2013. A. V. Balasubramanian and T. Ragul participated and presented the work done under the project. Subsidies have been availed from the Department of Animal Husbandry for the cultivation of *Azolla* and fodder grass for 11 beneficiaries. Under the Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millets Promotion (INSIMP) programme of the Department of Agriculture, a total of 60 beneficiaries have been selected from Kuttakarai village.

Poverty Reduction in Tamil Nadu through Sustainable Agriculture

This project supported by DFID, UK and HIVOS is in progress in Kancheepuram Thiruvannamalai and Nagapattinam districts. Under this project, a total of 8,959 beneficiaries have been selected from 79 village panchayats in six taluks of these districts. Village Agri Business Development Service Providers (VABDSPs) are in place for all the village panchayats. A total of 504 Sustainable Agriculture Self Help Groups (SASHGs) and 70 Panchayat Agriculture Development Committees (PADCs) have been formed. Beneficiaries are involved in the organic cultivation and demonstration of various technologies. A total of 144 farmers are involved in the seed production of paddy varieties, black gram, sesame, sunhemp and groundnut. Various organic farming technologies are being demonstrated by the beneficiaries in all the three districts. Beneficiary selection is in progress for establishing integrated kitchen gardens in the forthcoming *Aadipattam* (July

NEWSROOM

Happenings and more

- August). Under the component on production of quality inputs and setting up value addition units, eight community biopesticide units, nine community vermicompost units and five community value addition units have been set up in all the three districts. Microenterprises like poultry farming and cattle rearing have also been taken up by the beneficiaries. A total of 25 backyard poultry units have been started. A total of 12 Agriculture Machinery Facilitation Centres (AMFCs) have been established in Nagapattinam and Thiruvannamalai districts. A total of 32 training programmes and nine exposure visits have been organized for the beneficiaries and VABDSPs. A discussion meeting on value chain process in paddy and groundnut was conducted in Chettipulam and Periyakuthagai village panchayats of Nagapattinam district on 6th and 7th June, respectively. The Annual Project Review Meeting was conducted on 14th - 15th June at Hotel Raj Palace Sundar in Chennai. The tasks that were undertaken during the previous year were reviewed and a plan for the current year was made with all the team members. Government schemes have been availed for seeds, organic inputs, machineries, goat rearing and for conducting veterinary camps.

Work in Progress at Sukkankollai

In our experimental farm at Sukkankollai, crops like pigeon pea, brinjal, bhendi, tomato, sweet potato, creeping vegetables and fodder sorghum have been cultivated. Harvesting of different vegetable varieties is in progress in the demo kitchen garden. Green manure crops *sunhemp* and *daincha* have been sown in the fields as mixed crop. Under the polythene tent, tomato and beans have been raised. *Gliricidia* cuttings planted in the polythene bags are being maintained under the shade net house. Crops like brinjal, chilli, sunhemp, cluster beans, pigeon pea, black gram and sunhemp cultivated during the previous season were harvested. Production and use of compost and vermicompost are in progress. Cattle rearing, poultry farming and rabbit rearing are in progress in the farm. Economics of vermicompost production and cultivation of bhendi, pigeon pea, brinjal and cluster beans have been calculated and documented. Regular meetings and trainings are being organised in our Technology Resource Centre for the staff members, beneficiaries and aspirers.

RRA Project Review Meeting

On 26th and 27th April 2013, a review meeting of the RRA CP pilot programme that is being implemented in the Jawadhu hills block in Thiruvannamalai district was held in Chennai. The meeting was attended by all the CIKS team members and senior technical team members involved in the implementation of the programme and also present were Mr. Raghunathan, Mr. Balakrishnan and Mr. Johnson who are project partners from VLRC, Bengaluru. The meeting carried out a detailed review of various project components and discussed the CP proposal to take forward the pilot programme.

Training for the Farmers of BEDROC

A two day training programme on organic farming technologies was conducted for the farmers and women self help group members working with the organization BEDROC in Nagapattinam district on 29th - 30th April. A total of 36 farmers and staff members participated in the training programme. They were trained on basic aspects of organic farming, comparison with conventional farming, integrated farming, organic method of nutrient management, pest and disease management, input production etc. As part of the training programme the participants were taken to visit the integrated farm in Nemmeli, organic model farm in Ilaiyamadhukoodam and community vermicompost unit in Allivilagam village.

RRA Meeting at New Delhi

A review meeting of the RRA programme was held in New Delhi in the month of May 2013. On 7th and 8th May, there was a review of the progress of the CP programmes in which A. V. Balasubramanian participated along with T. Ragul and made presentations. On 9th and 10th May, there was a review of progress of the work of various nodes in which A. V. Balasubramanian participated

along with Dr. Venkatraman and made presentations.

TNSRLM Meeting

On 25th May, the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission had organized a meeting to discuss the proposals from Tamil Nadu being submitted under the *Mahila Kisan Swashaktikaran Pariyojana* (MKSP) programme of the National Rural Livelihood Mission. A.V. Balasubramanian participated in the meeting which was attended by various officials of the TNSRLM and District Project Managers as well as representatives of some agencies and NGOs and individual scientists who are being invited to be enrolled as experts to assist in the implementation of the programme in Tamil Nadu.

The Steering Committee Meeting of the DFID Funded Project

The third meeting of the steering committee of DFID funded project on Poverty Alleviation through Sustainable Agriculture in Southern India was held in Chennai on 15th June 2013. The meeting was attended by CIKS team members involved in the project, our project partners, Vrutti Livelihood Resources Centre as well as Mr. K. Suresh Kumar, DGM, NABARD. The steering committee reviewed the progress of the project and plans for the immediate future activities.

Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission Meeting on SRI

The Planning Commission of Tamil Nadu had convened a meeting on System of Rice Intensification at the office of the Commissioner of Agriculture in Chennai on 26th June, 2013. On behalf of CIKS, Mr. K. Subramanian, Programme Director and Dr. Vijay Subbiah, Sr. Programme Officer participated in the meeting. A presentation was made regarding CIKS activities in the area with suggestions about increasing the scale in which SRI activities are being carried out in the State.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS TO PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS



Exposure visits were organized for the Village Agri Business Development Service Providers (VABDSPs) of Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam and Thiruvannamalai districts with the support of the Ford Foundation under their Global Travel and Learning Fund (GTLF). The main objective of these visits were to make the beneficiaries understand the organizational structure, functioning, legal status, roles and responsibilities of the producer companies. The beneficiaries were taken to visit Kazhi Kadaimadai Farmers' Federations in Thiruvengadu, Tamil Nadu, Chetna Organic Farmers' Association (COFA) in Andhra Pradesh and Kabini Organic Farmers' Producer Company Limited (KOFPC) in Karnataka. A total of 42 beneficiaries from 39 villages of the above mentioned districts benefitted through these visits. They learnt various procedures and methodologies involved in the operation of Agriculture Producer Company. These exposure visits have increased the capacity and confidence of the beneficiaries.

VISITOR'S BOOK

Who's been dropping in at CIKS

- On 12th April, Mr. Dharmendar and Ms. Reshta from Chetna Organic representing the Soil Node of RRA visited CIKS.
- On 24th April, Mr. Krishnagopal of ALC India, Secunderabad representing the Institution Node of RRA visited CIKS for a discussion.
- On 10th May, Mr. Subhash Kumar along with a group of students from Loyola College, Chennai visited our organic experimental farm in Sukkankollai as part of the summer vacation training classes organized by Loyola College.
- On 15th May, Mrs. Jeyashree, AGM, NABARD visited our organic experimental farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 22nd June, a group of 10 Undergraduate Agriculture students from the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru College of Agriculture & Research Institute (PAJANCOA & RI), Karaikal visited the CIKS Sirkazhi field station.
- On 26th June, Mr. T. Vijayakumaran, AHM, Government Higher Secondary School, Nangoor visited the CIKS Sirkazhi field office.
- On 27th June, Mr. S. Narasimhan from Thiruparankundram, Chennai visited our organic research farm in Sukkankollai to get to know about various organic farming technologies.

TALK TO US

Send your feed back, comments and suggestions to info@ciks.org / ciksorg@gmail.com

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