



*CIKS Wishes all its friends & Well Wishers
A Very Happy and Prosperous 2013*

REVITALISATION OF RAINFED AGRICULTURE

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PILOT PROGRAMME FOR STRENGTHENING RAINFED AGRICULTURE

CIKS is implementing a pilot programme on strengthening rainfed agriculture in Jawadhu hills block of Thiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu from June 2012 onwards with support from Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) network of India. Some of the highlights of our intervention through this project are,

- Detailed seed survey has been conducted and more than 30 small millet varieties have been identified.
- Demonstration fields have been established for 27 millet varieties.
- Seed production of 13 millet varieties has been taken up by the beneficiaries.
- Front Line Demonstration for Improved variety CO4 (*Samai*) and native variety has been done in collaboration with TNAU, Coimbatore.
- Integrated kitchen gardens have established by 300 households using varieties of traditional vegetables. This serves as *in-situ* conservation centres for many traditional varieties.
- Fifty farmers are involved in the production of vegetable seeds.
- Demonstration of System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method of paddy cultivation has been taken up in 50 cents using five indigenous paddy varieties.
- An experiment to test the varietal performance of little millets has been conducted.
- Linkages have been established with the Department of Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry and Animal Husbandry and various other local institutions.



Nourishing home garden with indigenous crop varieties

Availed suitable schemes from these Government Departments.

- A total of nine farmers groups in the project area has been recognized as NABARD Farmers' Clubs and actively involved in the project activities.
- Efforts are on to establish a shade net house in the project area.
- A New Year 2013 Calendar that depicts life under rainfed agriculture at Jawadhu hills has been brought out in English.
- Work has been started for an Agricultural Services Facilitation Centre (ASFC) which will include a Community Seed Bank, Demonstration plots, Nursery etc.
- A small scale millet processing unit has been set up in one of the villages.



PROJECT WATCH *A round-up of our activities*

Organic Farming in Alangadu Village

Our centre is involved in the promotion of organic farming in Alangadu village of Nagapattinam district from January 2009. Under this fourth phase of the project, monthly meetings of the farmers' groups and the women's group were conducted. Beneficiaries are involved in the cultivation of paddy varieties in 22.92 acres. Demonstration of seed drill has been done in 1.5 acres. Regular production and sale of vermicompost is in progress in the community vermicompost unit. A total of 36 organic kitchen gardens and a community kitchen garden have been established. The Alangadu irrigation channel was mended and a motor and submersible pump has been set up for irrigation due to low water flow. Two new women's groups have been formed to get involved in vermicompost production and tailoring. A total of 500 saplings of six different tree species have been planted in the village. Rain water harvesting model has been set up in Primary School in Alangadu village. A training programme on mushroom cultivation was conducted for the women beneficiaries at Sirkazhi. In the evening tuition centre "Arivu Maiyam" established in Alangadu village, a total of 37 school students are being trained. On 28th December, an exposure visit was organized for them to Arignar Anna Zoological Park in Vandalur, Chennai. An exposure visit was organized for the women beneficiaries to the mushroom production and value addition units in Allivilagam and an integrated farm in Ilayamadukoodam village.

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. Under this project, *Spodoptera* and *Aphids* are being reared in our insect rearing laboratory in Sirkazhi. Bioassays have been conducted on *Aphids* and *Spodoptera litura* using Neem and *Pongamia* oil soap solutions, *Annona Kashayam*, *Andrographis Kashayam* and neem oil. *Pongamia* oil and neem oil soaps have been prepared based on the standardized procedure. Pot experiment on *Spodoptera litura* using neem oil soap solution has been conducted and analysis is in progress. Testing of efficacy of neem oil soap against *American boll worm* in red gram crop is in progress in collaboration with WASSAN, Hyderabad. On 27th and 28th December, Programme Director, Subhashini Sridhar participated in the DST Group Monitoring Workshop held in Cochin and presented the work done under the project.

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 from March 2012 onwards. Training programmes on "Strategies for price fixing for paddy, rice and value added products" and "Agriculture Producer Company (APC)" were

conducted for the beneficiaries. Project staff visited the 'Rice Tech Expo' organized in Chennai by Southern Rice Mill Owners Association on 14th October. Sirkazhi Organic Farmers' Association participated in the organic exhibition "BioFach 2012" organized by ICCOA in Bangalore between 29th November and 1st December 2012. Under the programme on *Magalir Thittam* (Women's programme) in Nagapattinam, two exhibitions were organized in Annai Therasa Hall in Valluvar Kottam, Chennai in October and December. Women SHGs under the guidance of CIKS in Nagapattinam district participated and made a very good sale. On 20th November, Mr. Sundar, General Manager, NABARD, Chennai visited Sirkazhi and interacted with office bearers of SOFA and women SHG members on various project activities. On 28th December, Programme Director, Subhashini Sridhar visited the Indian Organic Producer Company Ltd., in Cochin to discuss about marketing and network activities under Network of Asia and Pacific Producers.

Poverty Reduction in Tamil Nadu through Sustainable Agriculture

This project supported by DFID, UK has been initiated in Nagapattinam, Kancheepuram and Thiruvannamalai districts. Under this project, a total of 9,543 beneficiaries and 82 village panchayats have been selected from six taluks of these districts. A total of 460 Sustainable Agriculture

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Happenings and more

Groups (SAGs) have been formed. Baseline survey is in progress in all the three districts. A total of 10 project orientation trainings were conducted in the selected gram panchayats of Thiruvannamalai district. A total of 23 training programmes have been conducted for the office bearers of the SAGs in Kancheepuram district. A total of 25 training programmes and three exposure visits have been conducted for the beneficiaries. Twelve meetings were organized for the VABDSPs in all the three districts and discussions on various topics took place. On 15th October, an exposure visit cum training was organized for the VABDSPs of Nagapattinam district to the integrated farm in Nemelli and vermicompost production unit in Aadhamangalam village. On 28th November, an exposure visit was organized for the women beneficiaries of Alangadu village of Nagapattinam district to the Community vermicompost unit in Allivilagam village and integrated farm in Ilayamadhukoodam village. In Nagapattinam district, a total of eight veterinary camps have been organized in the panchayats of Aadhamangalam, Allivilagam, Pagasalai, Nemelli, Kondal etc., in collaboration with the Department of Animal Husbandry, Mayiladuthurai. In Nagapattinam district, 120 beneficiaries have been established home gardens. Efforts are in full swing to establish the Agriculture Producer Company and value addition unit in Thiruvannamalai and Nagapattinam districts. Government schemes have been availed for goat rearing, Azolla, fodder grass, vegetable seeds, cono weeder, power weeder, seed drill and for the training on vermicomposting. Quarterly project review meeting was held on 12th and 13th October in Sirkazhi. In Thiruvannamalai district, farmers' clubs were inaugurated in Kadambai and Avanavadi villages on 7th November by Mr. Sudharsan, AGM, NABARD.

Participation in Exhibition at Hyderabad

As a part of the eleventh Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held at Hi Tech City in Hyderabad, an exhibition was organized by the Centre for Environment Education (CEE), New Delhi between 1st and 19th October. CIKS and Sirkazhi Organic Farmers' Association participated in the exhibition and put up a stall displaying publications, audio visuals, organic products and value added products.

RRA Meeting in Madhya Pradesh

Mr. A. V. Balasubramanian, Dr. Vijay Subbiah and Dr. Venkat Raman attended the meeting of the Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) partners that was held at Bagli at the campus of Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS) in Madhya Pradesh between 5th and 7th November. During the course of the meeting they participated in various discussions and made presentations regarding the progress of the comprehensive pilot (CP) activities being implemented by CIKS in Jawadhu hills block of Thiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu. The progress of the work carried out by the seed node of RRA which is being coordinated by CIKS was also reviewed.

Visitor From RRA Livestock Node

Dr. Unnikrishnan, Veterinary Physician, Coordinator of the Livestock node of RRA network visited CIKS field area in Jawadhu hills block of Thiruvannamalai district on 26th and 27th November. He was given an orientation of various activities of our Centre in the Jawadhu hills region. A focus group discussion was held on issues relating to livestock, their diseases and mortality, veterinary services availed and awareness regarding this. Later on, Dr. Unnikrishnan accompanied by the CIKS team met Dr. Prakash and Dr. Varadarajan of the Animal Husbandry Department. Based on his visit plans were made for the integration of livestock related activities in the Jawadhu hills comprehensive pilot programme. On 28th November, Dr. Unnikrishnan also visited the CIKS office at Chennai and had a review and discussion with the technical team.

Visitors from Srilanka

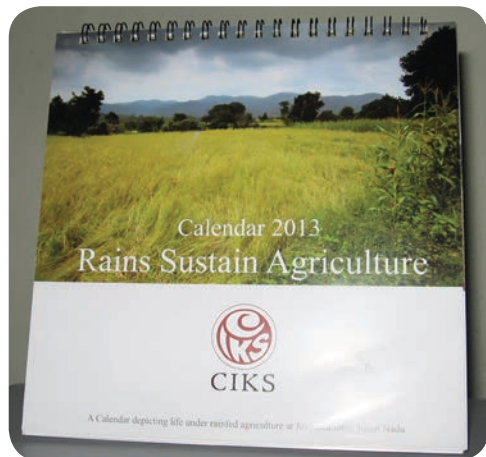
A group of 28 farmers, NGO staff members and Government officials from Srilanka visited CIKS between 3rd - 8th December for training and exposure on organic farming. Their visit was coordinated by the Sewa Lanka Foundation, Srilanka. We organized their programme at the request of Welthungerhilfe agency in New Delhi. They were taken to the CIKS organic research farm in Kancheepuram district and provided with series of trainings. Following this, they were taken to the CIKS Sirkazhi field station and visited CIKS organic farm, Community vermicompost unit, Community neem seed processing unit, Value addition unit, Integrated farm etc. They had discussions with the members of Sirkazhi Organic Farmers' Association regarding their marketing efforts.

Training for Andhra Farmers

A group of 22 women farmers accompanied by two staff members from Farmers Training Centre, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh visited CIKS Sirkazhi field station on 4th and 5th December. They were trained on various organic farming technologies. They were also taken to visit the community vermicompost unit, organic farm, value addition unit and Integrated farm. They had interaction with the women groups and farmers regarding organic farming technologies.

Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) Training Workshop

Between 10th and 14th December, a five days training programme was organized by the RRA network for providing training on various technical aspects to the network members who are implementing the comprehensive pilot programmes in various parts of India. The meeting was held in the campus of Bharat Agro Industry Federation, Tiptur, Karnataka. Four persons from CIKS participated in the meeting namely, Dr. G. Venkatraman, Dr. Vijay Subbiah, Mr. A. V. Balasubramanian and Mr. T. Ragul. The training modules were shared and presentations were made on "Agro biodiversity and its importance, situation analysis with respect to seed systems in rainfed areas and towards a robust seed system for rainfed areas".

BOOKSTORE*New Publications, Audiovisuals and Educational Materials***NEW YEAR 2013 CALENDAR -
"RAINS SUSTAIN AGRICULTURE"**

A desk top calendar on the theme of "Rains Sustain Agriculture" has been brought out in English for 2013. This calendar depicts the life under rainfed agriculture at Jawadhu hills of Thiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu, where CIKS is implementing a comprehensive pilot programme for the revitalisation of rainfed agriculture with the support of Revitalisation of Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) Network of India. Details on staple crops of Jawadhu hills, integral part of cattle in the life of tribes of Jawahu hills, diversified home gardens, backyard microenterprises etc., are provided in brief.

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

- Between 9th to 11th October, Mr. G.R. Dharmendar, Programme Manager, Chetna Organics (RRA Soil Node) visited our project area in Jawadhu hills to get an exposure and orientation of CIKS activities under CP RRA activities at Jawadhu Hills.
- On 17th October, Dr. R. Hema, Madras School of Economics, Chennai visited us for a discussion regarding participation of CIKS in a project on "Materiality of Rice".
- On 29th October, Mr. Sonde, Chartered Accountant and Mr. Stanley of The Churches Council for Child and Youth Care (CCCYC), Bengaluru visited us.
- On 24th November, a team of five persons consisting of Dr. Latha Satish, Mr. Satish, Ms. Kamala Sankaran, Mr. Sankaran and Mr. Govindram visited the CIKS farm and Technology Resource Centre at Sukkankollai to get to know about various of our activities.
- On 26th November, Ms. Maryam Rahmani of the Centre for Sustainable Development, Iran visited CIKS.
- On 30th November, Mr. O. B. Ramasubramanian, Consultant to the Tamil Nadu Government Pudhu Vazhou Project (PVP) visited CIKS for a discussion.
- On 8th December, Mr. Sandip of Vrutti, Bengaluru visited us for a discussion regarding the development of MKSP proposal in the Jawadhu hills field area.
- On 26th December, Mr. Chandrasekar and Dr. Hema from the Madras School of Economics, Chennai visited CIKS Sirkazhi field office for data collection on economics of paddy cultivation.
- On 26th and 28th December, a team of staff members of the Tamil Nadu Pudhu Vazhou Project (TNPVP), Kancheepuram district visited the CIKS organic research farm in Sukkankollai.
- On 31st December, Mr. Douglas from Australia visited the CIKS organic research farm in Sukkankollai.

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