



## BUILDING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGIES, CAPACITIES OF FPCs AND ESTABLISHING MARKET LINKAGES

In May 2019, CIKS commenced a project for Building Sustainable Agriculture Technologies, Capacities of Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) and Helping them to Establish Marketing Linkages. The project is being supported by Supraja Foundation. Under this project the following key activities are being taken up.

- The cultivation of Traditional Rice Varieties (TRVs) is being scaled up to 1250 acres spread over the districts of Thiruvannamalai, Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam and Ramanathapuram. In each district we have identified areas suitable for the cultivation of specific varieties and farmers who are interested in cultivating these varieties. Supply of quality seeds has been identified.
- A series of training programmes are being organized on climate resilient agriculture.
- A series of training programmes are also being organized on animal husbandry which is an important source of supplementary income and livelihoods.



*Seed Distribution to Farmers*

- Marketing linkages for these varieties are being arranged and established with traders and mill owners.
- These activities are being implemented and coordinated through FPCs with whom CIKS has been in touch and working for several years.

## International Day for Biological Diversity 2019



*The Hon'ble Vice President Mr. Venkaiah Naidu at the CIKS Stall - on International Biodiversity Day*

On 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019, the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change had organised a programme and exhibition at Chennai. The Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri. M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the function and the exhibition. At the invitation of NBA, A.V. Balasubramanian and Archana Prasad attended the inaugural function. CIKS had put up an exhibition stall wherein we displayed various of our publications and activities relating to biodiversity conservation. Also on display were the products being marketed by the Producer Companies and Sempulam Sustainable Solutions, particularly traditional rice varieties from Tamil Nadu State. The Vice President visited our stall and we shared with him a gift box of traditional rice varieties.



## **PROJECT WATCH** *A round-up of our activities*

### **Strengthening of Farmer Producer Companies – Phase – I - IV**

This project supported by Tamil Nadu Small Farmers Agri-business Consortium (TNSFAC) is being implemented in Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Perambalur, Kancheepuram and Thiruvannamalai districts. Raja Raja Chozhan FPC has received the Equity Grant of Rs. 10 lakhs from SFAC, Delhi and a MoU has been signed on 28<sup>th</sup> June. Construction of a seed processing unit is in progress in Pinnalur village by Veerananarayanan FPC in Cuddalore district. Training programmes on 'Strengthening of Business Activities' and 'Accounts Management for FPCs' were conducted for the BoDs, CEOs and LRPs of the Kanchi, Cheyyar and Groundnut FPCs in April. Mr. Poomurugesan, KKFF, Thiruvankadu and Mr. Srinivasan, Numeral Consulting, Vellore were the resource persons of these trainings. An exposure visit was organised for the selected BoDs, CEOs, LRPs and contact farmers of Kanchi, Cheyyar and Groundnut FPCs to ICAR – KVK at Keelnelli in Thiruvannamalai district and to the Cheyyar FPC in Thiruvannamalai on 30<sup>th</sup> April. CEO of Peravoorani FPC participated in a training on Neera Production on 17<sup>th</sup> May at Coimbatore. CEOs of the Thenpennai, Cheyyar, Groundnut and Kanchi FPCs participated in

the project review meeting held at TNSFAC office in Guindy on 28<sup>th</sup> May. A meeting has been conducted for the leaders of the Farmers' Interest Groups (FIGs) under the Perambalur FPC on 10<sup>th</sup> June at Chettikulam Market Complex. Monthly review meetings of the CEOs, BoDs and LRPs were conducted.

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

This programme supported by NABARD Tribal Development Fund is in progress in the Jawadhu hills block of Thiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu from May 2013 onwards. Activities of the project are spread over 39 hamlets covering 1051 beneficiary households with 400 acres in Kovilur panchayat. Four hundred acres of WADI fields (small orchard) with fruit crops and border crops have been raised by 511 beneficiary households. A total of 551 landless beneficiaries are involved in the other livelihood activities such as, rearing of cows, goats and pigs, maintaining tailoring unit, pettishops, poultry incubation unit and fodder cultivation. Project Implementation and Monitoring Committee (PIMC) meeting was conducted on 3<sup>rd</sup> April at Thiruvannamalai. Monitoring of project activities was done by Mr. Shreeram, DDM, NABARD,

Thiruvannamalai in April and May and by Shri. Uma Maheswara Rao, State Coordinator, NABCONS and Mr. Haridoss, Enumerator in June. Summer management practices like mulching, ploughing and basin formation are in progress in the WADI (small orchard) fields. A value addition unit has been constructed. We participated in the Mango festival organised by NABARD in Chennai on 31<sup>st</sup> May. We put up a stall and made a display and sale of different varieties of mangoes, tamarind, honey, groundnut oil etc. We also participated in the World Honey Bee Day celebrations held in NABARD office on 7<sup>th</sup> June. Following this, project representatives attended the half-yearly review meeting of this project at the NABARD office.

### **Namma Nellu - Conserving Indigenous Rice Varieties in Tamil Nadu**

*Namma Nellu* is an initiative of Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems (CIKS) to conserve traditional rice varieties in Tamil Nadu. Seeds of 42 different indigenous paddy varieties conserved and multiplied by 30 farmers in the previous season were procured. Processing, packaging and marketing of indigenous rice varieties are in progress. Germination tests have been conducted for 41 indigenous paddy varieties in May and June.



# NEWSROOM

Happenings and more

## Meeting at IIT Madras

A.V. Balasubramanian and Ms. Archana Prasad visited Dr. Mathangi Krishnamurthi (Prof. Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras) on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019 for a discussion about CIKS activities relating to Farmer Producer Collectives in Tamil Nadu State.

## Participation in Fish Farming Training

Mrs. Subhashini Sridhar participated in an Orientation programme on "Promote and Popularize Integrated Fish Farming for Risk Reduction and Livelihood Enhancement of Small Farmers in Nagapattinam" at Fish for All Centre, Poompuhar on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019. This training was organised by MSSRF under NABARD FSPF Programme. A total of 35 farmers also participated in the programme.

## Meeting with Team from Rajalakshmi Engineering College

On 29<sup>th</sup> April, A.V. Balasubramanian had a meeting with Prof. Sheela Anand, Dr. Kumar (Prof. and Head, Dept. of Computer Science) and Dr. Karthikeyan of Rajalakshmi Engineering College at Sriperumbudur near Chennai. A.V. Balasubramanian made a presentation about CIKS activities relating to agriculture and natural resource management to explore possibilities of joint efforts.

## Visit to M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Wayanad

Based on the demand potential and scope to expand the number of traditional varieties under conservation, Ms. Archana Prasad had visited the MSSRF in Wayanad on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019, to purchase seeds and establish a connect with the

farmers and Producer Companies in Wayanad. We were able to procure seeds of *Mullan Kaima*, *Gandaga shala* and *Jeeraga Sala*. These seeds were tested for germination and the same is intended to be conserved at CIKS farm.

## Workshop at Auroville

A two day workshop on "Purity Maintenance and Characterization of Traditional Paddy Varieties" was organised by Kisan Swaraj under the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA) programme, Tamil Nadu. This programme was held at Sustainable Livelihood Institute in Auroville on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> June. Subhashini Sridhar and R. Manikandan participated in this workshop along with 30 more participants from different parts of Tamil Nadu. Participants were trained on significance of traditional paddy varieties, DUS Characterization, documentation, conservation methods, roguing, seed storage etc.

## Meetings with FWWB, Ahmedabad

FWWB (Friends of Women's World of Banking) has been providing support to various CIKS activities relating to Producer Companies. Ms. Milee Parma of FWWB came to Chennai and had a meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June at the CIKS office with A.V. Balasubramanian, K. Subramanian and Ms. Archana Prasad. After that she spent two days at the field in Kancheepuram and Thiruvannamalai district having meetings with representatives of three Farmer Producer Companies namely Marutham, Seeds and Kanchi Companies. Subsequently, she visited the CIKS office at Chennai again on 13<sup>th</sup> June for a follow up meeting.

## New Project

**Support for AFC (Agri Facilitation Centre) for FPCs (Farmer Producer Collectives) established by CIKS in Tamil Nadu State**

FWWB (Friends of Women's World of Banking), Ahmedabad has been providing support for various activities of CIKS relating to FPCs. From May 2019, they have offered support for a set of FPCs established and nurtured by CIKS in Tamil Nadu State. The support is in the form of personnel of the AFC who will be in charge of agriculture activities, accounting and compliance as well as a Centre Manager. Support will also be provided to the FPCs for seeking professional services with respect to the maintenance of accounts and audit as well as compliances with respect to the legal and regulatory framework.

## Cooperation with GIZ, New Delhi

CIKS has been in discussion with GIZ, New Delhi to explore the possibility of obtaining support for CIKS work relating to the conservation and utilisation of traditional rice varieties in Tamil Nadu State. In this connection, Mr. Deepak Chamola, Technical officer, GIZ, New Delhi made a visit to Chennai on 14<sup>th</sup> June and had discussions with A.V. Balasubramanian.

## NABARD SLCC Meeting

A meeting of the State Level Consultative Committee (SLCC) of the NABARD Produce Fund was held on 28<sup>th</sup> June at the NABARD office in Chennai. The meeting was attended by Mr. A.V. Balasubramanian who is the member of the committee.

## BOOK STORE

A set of eight publications have been brought out as part of the FWFB supported Trainers' Training Programme carried out during the period January 2018 – February 2019.

1. Contracts : An Introduction for Producer Companies.
2. Compliances for Producer Companies: An Introduction.
3. Banking Operations based on Internet and Debit and Credit Cards: An Introduction.
4. *Inaiyathalam, Patru Attaigal mattrum Kadan Attaigalai Adippadaiyaga Konda Vangi Seyalpadugal: Oor Arimugam* (Tamil version of the above book)
5. *Vivasayigalin Vilaiporutkalai Sandhaipaduthum Vazhimuraigalum Kuraindhapatcha Aadharavu Vilaiyum : Oor Arimugam* (Title in English - Marketing of Agricultural Produce by Farmers and Minimum Support Price : An Introduction).
6. *Urpathiyalar Companigalin Vettrikkana Thittamidal Mattrum Therndha Seyalpadugal* (Title in English - Strategic Planning and Good Practices for Producer Companies).
7. *Urpathiyalar Companigalukkaana Vaniga Thittam : Oor Arimugam* (Title in English - Business Planning for Producer Companies : An Introduction). The book is given along with a CD which contains a sample business plan.
8. Glossary of Technical Terms on Farmer's Collectives and Related Areas (English – Tamil and Tamil – English).

These publications will be made available shortly as downloads from the CIKS website.

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

- On 2<sup>nd</sup> April, Mr. Nitin Chordia, Retail Marketing Consultant visited CIKS for a discussion with A.V. Balasubramanian and Dr. K. Vijayalakshmi.
- On 8<sup>th</sup> May, Mr. K. Sridhar of Akshaya Corporate Solutions.
- On 24<sup>th</sup> May, Mr. Aravind, Computer Consultant and Designer.
- On 27<sup>th</sup> May, Mr. Ajit Narayanan of Access Division, Google, California, USA.
- On 3<sup>rd</sup> June, Dr. Sheela Anand, Prof. Computer Science, Rajalakshmi College of Engineering, Sri Perumbudur, Chennai.

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