

CENTRE FOR INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

REPORT OF WORK DONE DURING THE PERIOD

APRIL 2021 - MARCH 2022

1. NABARD – PODF : NURTURING OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PRODUCER COMPANIES (PHASE – II)

Under this programme on nurturing of Sustainable Agriculture Producer Companies, a group of four Producer Companies, namely - Kurinji in Natham block of Dindigul district, Mullai in Reddiyarchatram block of Dindigul district, Seeds in Chetpet block of Tiruvannamalai district and Pudupalayam Producer Company in Pudupalayam block of Tiruvannamalai district are being supported by NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development). The BoDs (Board of Directors), CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and shareholders received training on sustainable agriculture practices, livestock management, FPC (Farmer Producer Company) compliances, business plan, records maintenance, the role of the BoDs and CEO, accounting systems and digitization. These four FPCs received support for remuneration to the CEO and support for conducting trainings to CEO and BoDs to the extent of Rs. 1.46 Lakh per FPC. The four FPCs submitted credit proposals to Samunnati and NABKISAN and availed support to the tune of Rs. 25 lakhs. Marketing linkages were created by CIKS for these four FPCs with rice mills and traders. They provided marketing linkages to farmers for the sale of traditional paddy varieties, vegetables, pulses, millets, maize, chickpea and coconut. They were also involved in the procurement and marketing of cattle feed, rice and groceries to their shareholders. The four FPCs completed their accounts and audit for the Financial Year 2020 - 21 and their compliances are up to date.

2. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGIES FOR FARMER PRODUCER COLLECTIVES AND ESTABLISHING MARKET LINKAGES (PHASE – II)

This project supported by Supraja Foundation, Hong Kong was implemented in Kancheepuram, Chengalpet, Tiruvannamalai, Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai,

Villupuram, Thiruvarur, Dindigul, and Ramanathapuram districts of Tamil Nadu State. The second phase of this project started in June 2020 It reached out directly to 2562 farmers from 149 panchayats. The cultivation of 59 traditional rice varieties was taken up over an area of 4006 acres. The farmers were provided with seeds for cultivation. Despite severe crop damage caused due to Nivar and Burevi cyclones by the end of the crop season, the project facilitated the procurement and sale of about 2303 MTs of traditional rice varieties through rice mills and traders both directly and also through the producer companies. Through CIKS support, Valanadu, Seeds, Pudupalayam and Kurinji FPCs submitted credit proposals to Samunnati Financial Intermediation and Services Pvt Ltd and NABKISAN and availed support to the tune of Rs. 170 lakhs. After the procurement and marketing of TRVs, all four FPCs repaid their entire working capital loan to Samunnati and NABKISAN. They also started marketing traditional rice varieties through online marketing channels like. Production of seeds of selected traditional varieties was also taken up over an area of 60 acres. Comprehensive training was also given on various climate- resilient agriculture technologies, cultivation of traditional rice varieties, seed production and post-harvest management technologies. A total of 2945 farmers belonging to five FPCs were trained. Similarly, 2367 farmers belonging to four FPCs were trained in livestock management with refresher training to selected master trainers.

3. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGIES FOR FARMER PRODUCER COLLECTIVES AND ESTABLISHING MARKET LINKAGES (PHASE – III)

This project supported by Supraja Foundation, Hong Kong was implemented in Kancheepuram, Chengalpet, Tiruvannamalai, Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, Thiruvarur, Thanjavur, Pudukottai and Ramanathapuram districts of Tamil Nadu State. The third phase of this project started in August 2021. It reached out to 2295 farmers' directly from 126 panchayats. The cultivation of 30 traditional rice varieties was taken up on 6535 acres. Despite severe crop damage caused due to heavy rainfall received by the end of the crop season, the project facilitated the procurement and sale of about 5365 MTs of traditional rice varieties through rice mills and traders both directly and also through the producer companies. Through CIKS support, Kurinji and Pudukottai FPCs submitted credit proposals to Samunnati, NABKISAN and Antenna and availed

Rs. 250 lakhs for the procurement of traditional rice varieties. After the procurement and marketing of TRVs, Kurinji and Pudukottai FPCs started their repayments to the lending institutions. Out of 5365 MTs of grains procured, the marketing of 3574 MTs was completed. The FPCs have also planned for value addition and marketing of 1791 MTs by Pudukottai and Valanadu FPCs. Seed production of 14 selected traditional varieties was taken up in 100 acres and created marketing linkage for 29 MTs. In addition to the varieties identified for bulk cultivation, we have also identified a set of varieties – “boutique varieties” that have the potential to be scaled up and could possibly constitute a good market and source of income for the farmers. 53 such varieties were cultivated in 30.5 acres and created marketing linkages for 10.9 MTs.

Comprehensive training were given on various climate-resilient agriculture technologies, traditional rice varieties cultivation and seed production, and post-harvest management technologies in paddy cultivation. A total of about 2384 farmers belonging to nine districts were trained. To assess the impacts of the project, three Focus Group Discussions were conducted with 48 farmers.

4. PROMOTION OF FARMER PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS IN TAMILNADU (SFAC IV)

The Small Farmers Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) identified CIKS as a resource institution for the formation and strengthening of FPOs in Tamil Nadu in December 2014. The activities were carried out in six districts viz. Nagapattinam, Tiruvannamalai, Kancheepuram, Cuddalore, Thanjavur and Perambalur. The activities of one FPC namely Veerananarayanan Agriculture Farmers Producer Company Limited and continued under the period from April 2021 to March 2022. Under Veerananarayanan FPC, the Matching equity grant application for Rs.10 lakhs was prepared and submitted in October 2021. TNSFAC, Chennai had sanctioned Rs. 5.06 lakhs during April 2022. Follow-up with SFAC, Delhi about equity grant Rs. 5 lakhs is in progress. Two exposure visits viz. to Pudukottai Organic Farmers Producer Company, Pudukkottai and Thiruvalluvar Farmers Producer Company, Salem was completed in December 2021 and January 2022. Totally 6 BOD and 32 shareholders participated in the above visits. A training program on Paddy seed production techniques was conducted in December 2021 at the Seed processing Unit, Pinnalur. Totally 40 farmers participated in the programme. The training was carried out in collaboration with Department of Seed Certification, Cuddalore.

The company has been sanctioned a seed processing unit under NADP Scheme – Sub Mission on planting material implemented by Department of Agri Marketing and Agri-Business, Cuddalore with a total outlay of Rs.60 lakhs. During this financial year, a total of 207 acres were covered during Kuruvai and samba season. 121.9 tonnes of paddy seeds were procured and processed in the seed processing unit, and 99.47 tonnes of good seeds were produced and sold to 610 shareholders and 600 non-shareholders within the district. The company has been sanctioned Rs.35 lakhs working capital loan under Indian Bank, Sethiyathoppu and Rs.10 lakhs as Mezzanine assistance under NABKISAN, Chennai. The annual General Body meeting was conducted in September 2021.

5. SUPPORT FOR INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH GROW FUND (A Project supported by EdelGive Foundation)

The GROW Fund is a first-of-its-kind initiative by EdelGive Foundation. It supports one hundred organizations from across India over a period of 24 months. This is a non-programmatic fund that helps in capacity building of an organisation; supports core cost and the overall organization development. One hundred NGOs were selected for support from all over India and CIKS is one among them. Under various theme areas, 25 NGO partners were selected from the North, South, West, East, and North-east zones. CIKS was selected under the thematic area –“Climate, Ecology and Animal Welfare” from Tamil Nadu. Six other Organizations were chosen under the same category from across India. The funding period is from April 2022 to March 2024.

6. PREPARATION OF A SOURCEBOOK ON VRKSHAYURVEDA (TRADITIONAL INDIAN PLANT SCIENCE)

The project aims to compile a Sourcebook of Vrکشayurveda. CIKS commenced work to produce this sourcebook on Vrکشayurveda (Traditional Indian Plant Science) in March 2021. This is a short-term project and it is being supported by INDIC Academy, Hyderabad. A draft of the book was submitted to the INDIC academy. The book has ten chapters and three annexures. It provides information about morphology, physiology and anatomy of plants, soil and plant nutrition, plant propagation, nomenclature and taxonomy of plants, pest and disease management and testing and validation.

7. REPORT ON NAMMA NELLU PROGRAMME - CONSERVING TRADITIONAL RICE VARIETIES IN TAMIL NADU

Namma Nellu is a programme for the support of conservation and characterization of traditional rice varieties through donations obtained from members of the general public as well as some CSR (Corporation Social Responsibility) programmes of some companies. One hundred and sixty traditional rice varieties were conserved at the CIKS Research farm, Sukkankollai, Chengalpattu district during the year 2021-2022. During the Navarai season (January 2021 to April 2021), two varieties (Kullakar and Karunguruvai), were cultivated organically in 2 acres in the CIKS farm and harvested at the end of April 2021. During the samba season (August 2021 – February 2022), 160 varieties were cultivated for conservation. In the same period, we have also cultivated 18 of the 160 traditional paddy varieties in a larger area of about 5 acres in total. All the varieties were harvested during the month of December 2021. The total quantity harvested and weighed is 3000 kgs. In the Samba 2021 season, seeds of 49 different traditional paddy varieties were cultivated in 26 acres in Kanchipuram, Chengalpattu, and Tiruvannamalai districts conservation and producing good quality seeds. Of the 49 different varieties, 42 varieties were cultivated in 24.75 acres and 37 varieties were harvested. From these 37 varieties, 10,338 kgs of 25 traditional paddy variety grains were marketed.

Through this programme, selected traditional rice varieties, namely Seeraga samba, Kitchili samba, Mapillai samba, Thooyamalli, Karuppu kowni, Varappukudainchan and Kuzhiadichan paddy varieties were cultivated in 5000 acres of land cultivated by 2319 farmers. Technical guidance regarding the cultivation of traditional paddy varieties was given to the farmers on a timely basis. Flood damage was observed in many of the field areas. In spite of the rain damage, harvest of the varieties was completed and 4910 metric tonnes of harvested grains were marketed through different linkages. This component is being done with collaborative funding from two philanthropic foundations – Supraja Foundation and Woka Foundation.

We have planned a series of programs to build awareness about TRV and its use among consumers and the general public. In March 2022, CIKS collaborated with Mr. Rakesh Raghunathan and organized an event – “Sacred Offerings” which was a presentation on the temple prasadam (Offerings to the Gods) which were specific to

the famous Srirangam Temple. The dishes presented included the sweet preparations Akkaraadisil and Srirangam Aravanai which were described with special emphasis on traditional rice varieties used in the preparations.

8. SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES FROM WOKA FOUNDATION

During the period from December 2021 for a duration of one year the Woka Foundation of USA provided support for sustainable agriculture activities of CIKS. The support was for human resources, work relating to various aspects of TRV (Traditional Rice Varieties) including conservation, characterization, scaling up and bio-chemical and nutritional characterization as well as for building technical and soft skills of the team members.

During the initial period, 20 boutique TRVs have been conserved and characterized. Five selected TRVs have been scaled up and cultivated in 270 acres. Biochemical and nutritional analysis of 20 varieties of TRV is in progress. Capacity building has focused on the cultivation of paddy for seeds. Programs for the popularization of TRV involving chefs and in collaboration with restaurants have commenced.

9. CIKS FLOOD RELIEF PROJECT

CIKS took up this work during the previous year to provide support to farmers who were affected by the cyclones Nivar and Burevi as well as heavy rainfall that caused severe damage to the agricultural fields during the period November 2020 – January 2021. This was supported through donations given by a large number of individuals and some organisations. Support was provided in the form of Seeraga samba seeds to nearly 300 farmers whose fields were affected and this relief was routed through 28 SHGs in the Tiruvannamalai region. In addition Karungkuruvai seeds were provided to a group of farmers in Maiyaladuthurai district. Two tonnes of neem seed powder was provided as support to farmers whose fields were affected. In addition CIKS facilitated the process of documenting the damage and making representation to the Government in the districts of Nagapattinam, Kanchipuram, Tiruvannamalai and Ramanathapuram districts to obtain flood relief support. In terms of the farmers who were selected for support preference was given to small and marginal farmers, those who were severely affected and priority was given to those who had not been able to get any relief from the Government.