



Sustainable Development

Through Partnerships

Water to Wealth

Efficient Water Management
for Secured Irrigation in
Korba District, Chhattisgarh
and Beed District,
Maharashtra

Towards Sustainable Agriculture

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EDITORIAL



We warmly share our first newsletter titled 'Sustainable Development: Through Partnerships'. To a great extent, this reflects the work carried out by AFPRO to enable the poor communities to move towards sustainable development and achieve enhanced socio-economic status in the society. Our interventions have empowered poor and marginalised communities, especially small farmers, by strengthening their resource base and capabilities through improved knowledge and skills. This is in line with our dedication to alleviate rural poverty through management of natural resources.

Dr. Jacob John
Executive Director
AFPRO

Towards Sustainable Agriculture

Climate Change Adaptation Measures For promotion of Livelihood of Rural Tribal Farmers in Chhattisgarh

Chhattisgarh has vast rural population with agriculture a chief economic occupation. Majority of the farmers are still practicing the subsistence agriculture with traditional methods of cultivation, resulting in low growth rates and productivity. Furthermore, various facets of climate variability and climate changes has major impacts on water resources, agriculture and its allied sectors, food security etc.

In order to combat this situation, AFPRO has partnered with **Edelgive Foundation** for implementation of Project entitled "Climate Change Adaptation Measures for promotion of Livelihood of Rural Tribal farmers Through Agriculture and Allied sector interventions", since 2018. Phase II aims to cover 11 project villages in Gurur block of Balod district envisaging water resource development and management leading to ensure/protect Kharif crop to optimize the yield and initiation of Rabi crops with available water resources in the existing and created infrastructure with regard to water resource development and management.

During Oct-Dec 2022 following interventions have been undertaken:

- Handholding support to 40 old women groups (196 women) for mushroom cultivation for income augmentation.
- Handholding support to 74 old farmers (covering 37 acres of land) for vegetable cultivation through technical support and guidance. Due to motivation, farmers have been able to take short term vegetable crops after paddy harvesting and augment their income.
- Training of 30 farmers on organic farming including preparation of organic fertilizer and manure like Brahmastra, Neemastra, Agnistras, etc and linkages with Government. Agriculture Department and Horticulture department under "Narua-Ghurua" programme for subsidy on organic fertilizer.
- Exposure visit of 110 male farmers at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kanker district, Chhattisgarh for understanding different modern agro techniques, usages of modern equipment of agriculture, FPO, integrated farming, etc
- Exposure visit of 118 female farmers at Maa Bamleswari Women Producer Company, Rajnandgaon district, Chhattisgarh.
- Linkages of farmers with Government. Agriculture and Horticulture department, has led to support of drip units to the 6 project farmers, Okra seed support for 30 farmers and Bio NPK (organic fertilizer) for 75 farmers for increasing their land area for vegetable cultivation.



Sustainable Tea Production

Countering Deforestation, Ensuring Traceability and Supporting Sustainable Tea Production in Assam

AFPRO, Guwahati team has been into promoting sustainable tea production among small tea growers, factories and estates in North and North East India since 2019, in collaboration with the trustee Sustainable Tea Foundation (tSTF) with the support of major global market leaders- Hindustan Unilever, Tata Consumer Products Limited, Gujarat Tea Processors and Packers Limited. In 2022, a major component was added in the program which addresses deforestation and traceability of tea from farm to factory and lastly to the consumers.



Some of the program updates are:

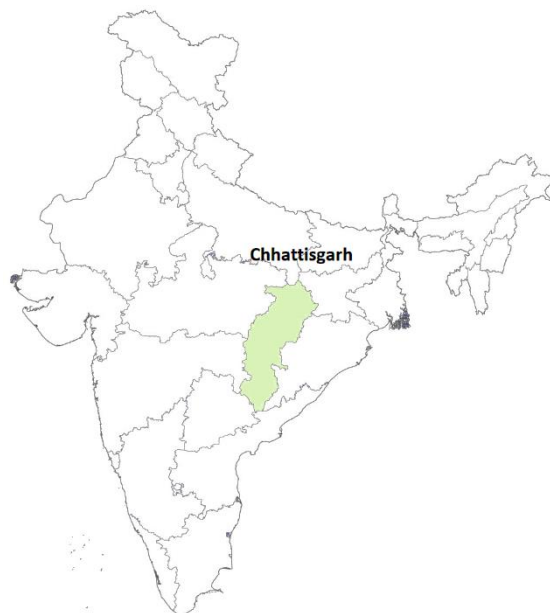
- tSTF has developed two mobile and web based application, one each for users who are already under trustee umbrella, and other for those who would be likely to join.
- AFPRO, as an implementing partner has been training the small tea growers at grass root level, their collection agents and factory staff all over north and north east India on the use of these applications. Both these applications can be used to track geo location data of the farm so as to locate the location and land use change therewith.
- Our partner trustee; visited Bhergaon Tea Estate and its STGs in 2022 and appreciated AFPRO's work for the awareness about the traceability among the farmers of the garden and use of the "tracetea" app by the small tea growers.
- A joint team from Unilever (Global), Hindustan Unilever, IDH (India), trustee Sustainable Tea Foundation (tSTF) visited two factories implemented by AFPRO, in Dibrugarh district in Assam, and appreciated the work to arrest deforestation in the tea areas and traceability from farm to consumers. They have visited two factories namely Teamafco Private Limited, and Ranglal Tea and Industries Pvt. Ltd.



Water to Wealth

Efficient Water Management for Secured Irrigation

Chhattisgarh has a limited irrigation systems. Large variation in the yearly rainfall directly affects the production of rice. Majority of the farmers are still practicing traditional methods of cultivation, resulting in low growth rates and productivity. Rain water harvesting is a prime concern to protect/ensure Kharif crops. With support of BALCO and Vedanta, AFPRO is implementing project "Mor Jal, Mor Maati" in 32 villages of Korba block, Korba district, Chhattisgarh. The project envisages water resource development and management for better irrigation opportunities and crop yield optimization along with other livelihood enhancement interventions on poultry, goat rearing, fish farming, etc.



In Oct-Dec 2022, 1948 farmers (35% of total target) and 1653 acre land has been covered under core activities including:

- Water Harvesting, Recharging and Conservation works like construction of 8 dug wells, while secured irrigation ensured from 19 farm ponds, renovation of 2 ponds. Also assistance provided for irrigation viz. electric pumps to 7 farmers as well as diesel pumps to 2 farmers.
- Soil and Moisture Conservation works like soil bunds for 41 farmers
- Capacity building and handholding for enhancing income for Paddy through SRI (Systematic Rice Intensification) covering 301 farmers.
- Technical support for value addition in rain fed Paddy and Kodo cultivation for enhanced income.
- Technical support and partial input support for improved cultivation practices for Rabi cropping (wheat/oil/seed/pulses).
- Promotion of small plot high value crops like vegetables for 92 farmers.
- Support for "Hydroponic units" set up for fodder production in 2 villages Parsakhola and Murdhowa and linkages with Goat farming
- Input and technical support for fish farming (5 farm ponds), poultry rearing in 17 villages, 30 units for goat rearing for income augmentation.
- Extensive capacity building of farmers and households on better agriculture, poultry and cattle rearing.

Due to improved Paddy cultivation practices, farmers have reported average rise of crop productivity by 22% and income enhancement of Rs. 8000 per family.



Integrated Water Management and Livelihood Enhancement

Community Based Water Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture in Maharashtra

With support of CSR wings of VOLTAS Ltd., APFRO has been implementing project "Community Based Water Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture" in selected six villages of Ambajogai and Dharur block in Beed district of Maharashtra. The project objective is to improve the lives of people through adoption of integrated approach for water and livelihood enhancement. The project focuses on improved irrigation potential through creation of water harvesting structures, supporting economic development of women through SHGs and promoting small-medium enterprises, promoting sustainable agricultural practices as well as building capacity of local institutions for sustenance of interventions.



Some of the interventions for this quarter are:

- 4 Village Water Committee trainings for Kuranwadi, Chichkhandi, Umrai and Umarewadi villages with involvement of all 68 VWC members with focus on village development, importance of WRD, roles and responsibilities of VWC members, maintenance funds for WRD activity.
- Conducting 6 trainings on better agronomic practices for Rabi crops including seed selection and treatment, integrated pest and nutrient management, decent work, etc. covering 194 farmers. As a result of farmers training, the farmers are well aware about importance of soil testing and seed treatment aspects. Farmers have started seed treatment practices and calendar based pesticide application
- 12 Frontline demonstrations for various practices of IPM/INM/Decent work, etc including supply of Bio Agri input to the demo farmers
- Installation of 23 vermi beds
- Preparation of 5 IEC pamphlets on better agronomic practices and distribution to 3000 farmers
- Training of 1 FPO at Manavlok Sanstha, Ambajogai with involvement of 18 FPO members and Promoter from Ambajogai and Dharur blocks FPO.
- 2 Exposure visit for 18 FPO members at Mulamai FPO, Rahuri and Sahydari FPO, Dindori.
- 1 skill based training on Goat rearing at KVK, Digholamba, Ambajogai with involvement of 28 women from all project villages
- Establishment of neno enterprises is done through women SHGs viz Goat rearing, tailoring, Gravity Separator, etc. This included distribution of sewing machines to 30 women along with skill training and distribution of goats to 15 women beneficiaries for livelihood enhancement.



Innovations in Agriculture

Better Cotton Initiative Program in Gujarat

Cotton is one of the major crops in Maharashtra and Gujarat states. AFPRO works with cotton producers to achieve sustainability in cotton production in manner that can maintain production level with minimal environmental impacts, improve income from cotton through better productivity as well as lower input cost, promote reduction of harmful chemicals in production and its appropriate usage for better health of cotton growers. "Better Cotton Initiative" program has been initiated by AFPRO in Gujarat with support of Better Cotton Growth and Innovation Fund (BCGIF), Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) and GIZ.

Cultivating Ideas of Growth- Story of Farm Innovator in Chudu Village, Gujarat

Ashokbhai Movliya, a 25-year-old BCI farmer cum field facilitator from Chuda village of Bhesan block, Junagadh district in Gujarat joined BCI International program in 2019. He was linked with Junagadh Agriculture University for technical guidance and was provided technical assistance to adopt better cotton management practices.

He adopted various innovative practices from sowing to harvesting of cotton including Integrated Pest Management, bio pesticides and has not used any red label pesticides. He also adopted soil fertility management practices like intercropping and used organic vermi-compost for soil improvement. He adopted canopy management first time to reduce vegetative growth. Under this practice, he has done de-topping of all plants and removed the unwanted branches to increase fruiting branches and bolls. He also prepared light house traps to manage wild animals attack from empty oil tin.

Within short span, he adopted environment friendly practices and obtained good results in cotton cultivation. Ashokbhai truly demonstrated innovative model farm, which has great potential of replication.





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