

∞ **Strengthening resources and strategies...**

The period was marked by intensive planning exercises with the area units in preparing plans for the next two years (2004-05). An important decision made in this exercise was for the area units to devote efforts to work in clusters of villages, with groups of farmers, so as to build up, over time, illustrative cases of sustainable agriculture.

AME team has been further strengthened. The new staff members are: G. Chandrasekhar and Surekha Sankanagoudar at Bangalore; K. Shobha Rani at Madanapalli; B.K. Suresh and S. Channakeshava at Raichur; Ravindranath Reddy, Rudragouda, B.Girish, V.Prasanna and B. Manjunath at Bellary; S. Sharana Bhupal, B.G. Mahesh and A.R. Nandakishore at Bijapur.

∞ **FFS expanding to other crops...**

Based on farmers needs, moving from crops like groundnut, cotton and paddy, FFS is being initiated in crops like sunflower and bajra in Raichur area.

∞ **Collaborative trainings with academia...**

AME has forged collaborations with academia for strengthening training activities.

TNAU is supporting NGOs training needs at the field level. Two trainings on quality seed production have been organised for NGO partner staff and farmer groups and women self help group members.

The Agricultural Engineering College and Research Institute, Tiruchi collaborated with AME-Tiruchi in organising one training cum demonstration on the use of the drum seeder technology for direct sowing of paddy, to farmers and NGO staff.

Scientists of Livestock Research Station at Palamaner in collaboration with AME Madanapalli conducted training on livestock management to farmers and NGOs.

∞ **Field day brings together stakeholders...**

There is an increasing involvement of various stakeholders, particularly in AME's field activities.

Sunflower field day was conducted in Tiruchi wherein the Vice Chancellor of TNAU, Director of Soil and Crop Management Studies, Deans of the colleges of Agriculture and Agricultural Engineering (Tiruchi),

Scientists from the Department of Oilseeds, representatives from NABARD, DoA, Seed Certification agency etc., participated.

∞ **NGOs taking the lead...**

Effective networking by Madanapalli team has enabled NGOs in taking lead in spreading LEISA technologies. SAN, an NGO network in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, took the lead role in organising a workshop on "Integrated Farming for Sustainability" to sensitise stakeholders towards sustainable agriculture.

∞ **Networks getting stronger...**

AME-NGO network at Raichur is getting strengthened. With Natural Resource Management as its goal, this network met and discussed how NGOs interested and working on NRM, could evolve as a resource center on NRM.

∞ **Collaborations – New and Existing...**

AME, Bellary has collaborated with the Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute on NATP funded project, "Developing live fencing systems for soil and water conservation, crop diversification and sustaining productivity in rainfed areas".

AME, Tiruchi, is in the process of collaborating with the International Child Care Trust, India for a period of one year on training youth in sustainable agriculture and Natural Resource Management.

AME along with PRAWARDA is involved in promoting Grama Gnana Kendra (GGK), a think tank in the village to influence the policy decisions related to food, fodder and income at the village level. AME has been supporting the programme in capacity building of GGK members, developing tools for documentation and documenting indigenous knowledge systems.

AME, Tiruchi, is exploring a collaborative activity with the Bone Millers Association, New Delhi, on the potential use of bone meal as a source of organic phosphorous in paddy cultivation. The Association has been requested to offer one ton of bone meal free of cost for trials in PTD.

AME, Tiruchi, is identified as a potential partner to collaborate with other resource organisations in an All India Coordinated Project (AICP) on "Bio-integrated Resource Management for Improving Livelihood Quality

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and Food Security of Resource Poor Farmers". The project is likely to be sponsored by DST, New Delhi.

AME and TERI core team were involved in a workshop on Logical Framework Analysis held at TERI, Bangalore between 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 2003. The objective was to identify areas for intervention in the proposed project on "Rural Energy and Social Change in Semi Arid Areas of Northern Karnataka".

As regional hub in South Asia of Intersard Asia project, AME along with GEAG has organised the training workshop on Intersard web based tool for information sharing on best practices in sustainable agriculture, NRM and rural development. Primarily organised by GEAG, the workshop included participants from large NGOs and NGO networks, Research and Government institutions from India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

#### ☞ **LEISA India – Expanding its reach...**

Three issues of LEISA India were produced during this period – a biotechnology supplement, Issues on Farmers Field Schools and Sustainable Livestock Management. With LEISA India back on its production schedules, there has been a significant support in the readership as well as response to call for papers.

#### ☞ **Exchanging experiences...**

A 23-member team from Sikkim, comprising of government officials and farmers visited AME team at Madanapalli to understand the PTD processes and methods of working with farmer groups. The team visited Valasaguttapalli village for an interaction on institutional aspects of PTD with the PTD practicing farmers.

Master farmers from Bellary region (CIDOW) interacted with farmers of Northern Karnataka who practiced various innovative techniques in soil and water conservation.

#### ☞ **Sharing our learnings...**

AME Tiruchi, participated in an international symposium on "Transitions in agriculture for enhancing water productivity", organised by TNAU, ICAR, Plant Research international (Wageningen), International Water Management Institute (Colombo) and International platform for saving water in Rice. Issues like participatory research in dryland farming, multi stakeholder approach, water quality, and NGOs as partners in research were discussed.

AME, Tiruchi's PTD experiences in cotton based farming were shared in the Cotton Round Table held in Hyderabad.

A book on quality seed production has been published in Tamil co-authored by AME staff, Tiruchi.

Training materials on PTD options in dryland Groundnut and Cotton management have been brought out in Tamil.

AME, Bellary prepared a concept paper on "Sustainable bio-intensive gardens as a nutrition initiative" for Project Implementing Agency, Upparahalla watershed, Bellary.

Presentation on AME Foundation's approach to Sustainable Agriculture in dryland context was made in the "Training on Sustainable Agriculture" held at Mysore, organised by KROSS in collaboration with CARITAS India and SARRA Bangalore, during 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> August 2003.

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