

AME Foundation promotes ecological agriculture among small and marginal farmers in the semi arid areas of the Deccan Plateau through generating alternatives, enriching the knowledge base, training, linking development agencies and sharing experience.

Monsoon has arrived in full swing. Farmers are getting ready for sowings. The period has been brisk for AME staff too guiding farmers on key areas including soil and water conservation and soil fertility enhancement. Capacity building of farmers through trainings and study tours are being organised.

NGO partners working with our area units were met and their competence and abilities to bring about a change in farming practices were discussed. Areas requiring attention were identified and plans for mutual action were drawn for the year 2004-05.

Field activities

In **Bellary**, majority farmers have adopted 'Summer ploughing' for enabling in-situ moisture conservation along with application of FYM in recommended doses. Groundnut varietal trial field day was held at Kanamadgu (Upparahalla) and Marlahalli (Chinnahagari) for sharing information on different varieties of groundnut, such as, K-134, KRG-1, R-8808, R-9251, R-2001-1. Farmers and master farmers from various villages and the PNGO staff attended.

In **Madanapalli**, all the farmers have done summer ploughing while few have taken up bund strengthening and in-situ green manuring. Ploughing across the slope has been initiated. The process of recycling farm wastes has been initiated with the construction of 11 compost pits and 13 vermi-compost units.

Early ploughing across the slope, silt application, FYM application and field bunding are some of the activities taken up by the farmers from **Tiruchi** area. PTD options have been designed for groundnut and cotton crops. Composting activity has created interest among the farmers.

Farmers from **Raichur** area have completed ploughing across the slope. Sowing in groundnut, bajra and cotton is going on. Seed treatment with biologicals has been demonstrated. Micro planning was completed with majority of the participating farmers for integrating bio-mass generation, livestock and crop management. 40 Groundnut farmers have taken up group nursery for raising four tree species in two villages.

50 farmers of Kanmadi Vasthi and Banni Vasthi in Inchageri village in **Bijapur** are participating in the FFS in Tomato crop. AME Bijapur is also facilitating FFS in Chilli in Devaranimbaragi village, in which 25 farmers are participating. FFS in Pomegranate has also been initiated where 25 farmers are participating. Sowing of legumes and minor millets,

nursery raising and transplantation of tomato and chilli were the other field activities undertaken.

For the past two years carrot farmers of Allappanahalli village in Hoskote taluk are incurring losses due to the attack of a root-feeding insect, drastically dropping its market value. The signs and symptoms are similar to carrot root fly or rust fly, which, as per PDBC-Bangalore, has not been reported in India till now. Efforts are on by AME **Central Unit** and PDBC in finding a solution to this problem.

In Nallaguttlapalli and Sunnappagutta in Kolar district, groundnut groups have been formed. Root grub is identified as the major problem. Plans include seed treatment with Agave, Eucalyptus extracts, Chlorpyrifos and soil treatment with Pongamia and Neem cake to arrest root grub attack, Trichoderma seed treatment for soil borne diseases and application of enriched FYM and change in cropping pattern.

Trainings and study tours

Training programmes and study tours were organized to enhance farmers' capacities.

AME-Tiruchi trained 94 farmers from Manborai and Karatampatty villages, in soil and water conservation methods and preparation of enriched manure.

AME-Bijapur, organized a field level workshop for Pomegranate farmers of Jeerankalagi and Jigjeevani villages on Integrated Crop Management with an objective of disseminating information on improved package of practices.

150 farmers of Inchageri, Jeekankalagi, Jigjeevani, Kanakanal villages were oriented on crop rotation with legumes.

To revive the cultivation of minor millets, two Orientations were done for the farmers of L.T. No.1

Inchageri, and Devaranimbaragi villages in Bijapur.

75 farmers from Inchageri, Kanakanal and L.T.No. 1 with legume, minor millet, tomato, and sorghum based farming systems were oriented on in-situ moisture conservation

AME-Madanapalli conducted seven training programmes for farmers on soil and water conservation and groundnut cultivation practices.

Around 870 farmers were taken on various study tours by the Central unit as well as the area units during the period. The details are given in the Table.

Training our partners

AME-Central Unit trained 26 Team Members and Principal Implementing Agency (PIA) staff of NWDPRA watersheds, on groundnut and cotton technologies promoted by AME and on community participation. This workshop on “Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture in Watershed Areas”, was organized by the Department of Agriculture, Tamil Nadu at Vellore,

AME-Tiruchi organized a Workshop on PRA. Hands on experience was imparted by conducting PRA in one of the project villages. DST South zone partners in the BIOFARMS project, ICRA (Bangalore), CERD (Pondicherry), Mithranikethan (Kerala) and Vivekananda Kendra (Kanyakumari) participated in the workshop.

6 NGO staff were trained on PRA methodology and specific tools for assessing NRM aspects at Nochium village, Perambalur. After the training, participants conducted PRA in 20 villages in 7

clusters of which 5 were assisted by AMEF staff and 13 directly by the NGOs.

Partner NGO field staff and farmers in Raichur have been trained on the process of FFS. 32 farmers, including 9 women have accepted to participate in the season long FFS.

AME-Madanapalli trained staff of six partner NGOs on PRA.

Building internal capacities

A Management workshop was organized by AME for its staff during 19-21st May 2004. The main objective was to enable AME staff to understand the aims, activities and strategies of the project proposal submitted to FAO and prepare them to perform the required functions. The workshop also enabled the participants to gain better clarity on AMEF’s Vision and Mission, Team building, HR and Gender aspects.

Mr. Raviprakash and Dr. Arun Balamatti participated in the Land Degradation Assessment (LADA) Workshop, FAO, Rome, during 24-26th May 2004. Presentations were focused on LADA methodology. The aim of this project is to assess the extent of land degradation, reasons for the same and mapping the degraded lands at global level.

Dr. Arun Balamatti participated in the (a) International Conference on Renewable Energy Resources, Bonn, Germany (1-4 June) and presented a paper on farmer innovation in Wave energy; (b) International Summer School, Flensburg, Germany (7-12 June); (c) shared ITK

Details of study tours organized by AMEF units

Area Unit	Participants	Location	Purpose
Bellary	20 Sericulture farmers of Upparahalla watershed area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressive farmer-Navanikere CSR&TI-Mysore BIRD-K-Tiptur 	To enable farmers to learn new technologies in sericulture, particularly of dry land sericulture.
Madanapalli	Farmers (150) NGO staff (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BAIF-Tiptur, Narayana Reddy farm - Dodballapur, ARS-Kadiri, Agri. Implements Centre-Garladinne, Ayurveda Pharmacy - UAS Bangalore Indraprasta - Mysore. 	To enable farmers to see activities related to Sustainable Agriculture and to interact with scientists, development workers and fellow farmers and implement a few feasible activities on their farms.
Tiruchi	Farmers (247) and NGO staff (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BAIF - Karnataka, AMEF – Madanapalli CHASE TRUST - Madurai. 	To enable farmers to learn NRM and biomass regeneration aspects from fellow farmers
Raichur	Farmers (400)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BAIF, Dharwad KVK-Hulikoti Farms of progressive farmers in Raichur, Gadag and Bagalkot 	To see the eco-friendly approaches used in different farming situations.
Bangalore	Farmers (55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narayana Reddy farm - Dodballapur 	To stimulate each of the group to function as a more cohesive unit; to sensitize them on the utility of practices like mixed cropping, composting, vermi composting and biomass production and to create a platform for the farmers to interact with Narayana Reddy.

documentation experiences in the Workshop on promoting local innovation in Agriculture & Natural Resource Management, the Netherlands (14-15 June 2004).

Mr. G. Ravikumar, participated in a planning workshop organised by the Department of Science and Technology for the project leaders of the AICP on bio farms at Dehradun during 21-23 May, 2004. AME Foundation will work in coordination with five southern Indian partners (ICRA, CERD, DDS, MITHRANIKETHAN, VK), when the project begins in July 2004.

Mr. B.M. Badiger participated in the week long training programme on "Project Development and management for NGOs" at NIRD, Hyderabad.

Mr. Shyam Kulkarni and Mr. Gangadharswamy from AME Bellary, participated in a Workshop on "Market development strategy for Agriculture and Non land based products", organized by MART and KAWAD Bangalore. The objective of the workshop was to develop a strategic road map for effective marketing of NLBA and farm products in KAWAD project villages.

Mr. Raviprakash and Mr. B. M. Badiger attended 6th Cotton Round Table workshop organised by APCOT at CRIDA, Hyderabad during 9-10, June, 2004.

Mr. N. R. Adishesha Balaji from the Central Unit and Mr. A.R. Nandakishore from AME-Bijapur attended a seminar on Tally, an accounting package. The seminar was organized by J.L.Infomatrix Ltd., B'lore on 18th June, in which representatives from various trading concerns participated.

Three Study circle meetings were organised at the Central Unit. Discussions were held on IPM, FFS and Gender based on which guidelines are being prepared.



Working with institutions

AME-Bellary worked with the Karnataka Agricultural Implements and Allied Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd, Hubli, for ensuring proper spacing, timely sowing and reducing labour cost in groundnut crop. Demonstrations were held for bullock and tractor drawn seed planters at Chinnahagari and Upparahalla watershed areas. The demonstrations were effective in motivating the implementing agencies to purchase 28 bullock drawn and 4 tractor drawn seed planters shortly, which will be offered to watershed committees.

Interaction with institutions like the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad and Bangalore, the State Agricultural Department, Agricultural Research Stations etc., has been a continuous one for mutual enhancement of knowledge. They have been assisting in input mobilization for most of the area units.

AMEF in the media

Radio talk by G. Ravi Kumar (AMEF-Tiruchi), "How to manage a VVV Club for better performance" in Tamil, The 10-minute talk was broadcasted by AIR on 29th April with repeat broadcasts thereafter.

Two television programmes on the experiences of AME Bijapur on Tomato Nursery Preparation and Tomato transplantation were telecast in "Annadata" programme of ETV-Kannada

Efforts are on to utilize the services of research and training organizations – a) sericulture farmers from Bellary area were trained on Chawki silkworm rearing by CSR & TI, Mysore (b) 5 groundnut varieties were sent for oil estimation through NMR Regional Agricultural Research Station, Raichur.

Project Directorate of Biological control (PDBC) has been involved in finding solutions for the carrot pest resembling root fly. Scientist from PDBC visited the pest affected carrot field and collected specimens for further investigation.

Interaction with institutions like IIHR, Hessarghatta, ICRA, Bangalore, BCRL (Pest Control India) and UAS, GKVK, Bangalore have been initiated to understand more about organic vegetable production.

Raichur unit has interacted with the Agricultural College, Raichur and the Department of Animal Husbandry for conducting animal health camps and with KVK Gulbarga and RRS-Raichur for input (bio-agents) mobilization.

Our visitors

Dr. Stein Bie, Chairman, ILEIA Foundation, visited AMEF Bangalore Office and had discussions with the Chairman of AMEF, Dr. R. Dwarakinath and the staff. Dr. Stein Bie shared his valuable insights into the relevance of LEISA as well as institutional development aspects. He commended the LEISA India team for achieving 'unprecedented productivity'.

Dr. H. Bhaskar, Executive Director of KAWAD, visited FFS field in Bijapur area on 4th June 2004.

A team of 44 farmers and staff of ISARD, an NGO in Dharwad district, implementing watershed project, visited Inchigeri Village of Doddahalla watershed in Bijapur to understand AME's work.

Staff from MART Delhi and a task force for agriculture marketing met FFS farmers in Bijapur to explore the possibility of forming CBOs to look into the marketing of agricultural produce.

Staff of ETC-India, Bangalore visited Raichur and Madanapalli Area Units during April/May 2004 to study the impact of white grub project. The project was undertaken by AME in groundnut crop during Kharif, 1998, in collaboration with ICRISAT, Hyderabad.

Celebrating our partners success

CICR, Coimbatore organized a state level street play competition on the theme "Insecticide resistance management for Cotton pests". Two NGO partners (REEDS and PSSS) participated in the state level competition and won the **first and second prizes** respectively. Consequently, REEDS was nominated for a national level competition held at CICR, Nagpur and won **two awards** (one for best acting and the other for the best script technically supported by AME Foundation).

A pilot proposal to promote tree based farming in cotton farming system in three villages of Raichur, has been submitted to the National Afforestation and Eco Development Board, Department of Forestry, Bangalore. The proposed project provides scope for generating more biomass, ensuring increase in farm production and availability of FYM, fodder and fuel to the farm families.

Documentation

S.S.Madiwalar (AME-Bijapur), "Communication is the key" (on Seed treatment technology and its communication), KAWAD monthly magazine Jala Nela Samrudhi –April 2004- (Kannada and English)

Shyam Kulkarni (AME-Bellary), "Importance of Rhizobium, Benefits by treating seeds with Rhizobium" (Kannada)

G. Ravi Kumar (Co-Author) (AME-Tiruchi), "Children and the Red hairy caterpillar offensive" on experiences of KUDMBAM (supported technically by AME project) in the control of RHC in LEISA Magazine (Global edition), June 2004.

B. Vijayalakshmi and G. Ravi Kumar (AME-Tiruchi), "Experiences of AME Foundation in promoting

Cotton based Farming system in the Perambalur District (Tamilnadu) in Kharif 2003", presented in the APCOT – Cotton Round table held at CRIDA on 8th and 9th June 2004.

The following Selected readings, Guidelines and Case studies were brought out.

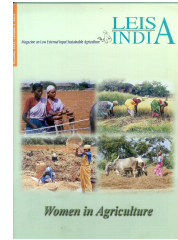
- **Selected Readings – 2:** Y D Naidu and Edith van Walsum, "PTD for sustainable dryland agriculture in South India:balancing our way to scale"
- **Guidelines 1** - "In-situ moisture conservation-the key technology for dryland farming"
- **Guidelines 2** - "Participatory Technology Development"
- **Case studies**

B. Vijayalakshmi, (AME-Tiruchi), "Varieties make a difference – Experiences of a farmer experimenter", a Case study.

G.M. Hegde (AME-Bellary), "Sri Mallikarjuna master farmer - A Case study"

LEISA India

One pending issue on "Women in agriculture" was produced with IDRC support. With this issue, production of all the pending issues have been cleared.



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