

SAFE-World Project/Initiative Summary

Country: India

Project/Initiative Title: Rural Communes
1976

Scale: individual/community Nos. farmers: 13 Mahila Hectares: 1780
Mandal Groups

Agro-Ecological Zone: V

Improvement types

1x	2	3x	4	5x	6x	7	8x	9x
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Success and Limits to spread

Success	Limits
1b,3e,4a	2a, 3a, 3c

A. Key Impacts

A1 - Productivity

	Before/Without	After/With	% change
Tomato	-	4t/ha	New crop
Chilli	-	2t/ha	New crop
Brinjal	-	2t/ha	New crop

A2 - Impacts on natural capital

Vegetation & Conservation of natural resources such as soil / water / vegetation has helped in maintaining healthy environment and ensures sustainability due to resource regeneration.

Since 1994 RC has taken up Comprehensive Watershed Development activity and Sustainable agriculture is part of it. Undertaking of various treatments such as mechanical and vegetative treatments for soil and water conservation was one part, which was also supported with measures such as _ crop planning, use / plantation of grasses, plantation of trees according to slope categories, use of livestock into agriculture, propagation & plantation of herbal medicinal plants and local indigenous tree species, alley cropping, inter cropping, mulching etc.

Although this is only 5th year of project various positive benefits can be observed such as - increase in groundwater level due to which many wells, which were dry earlier have water now.

- * extent of soil erosion have been reduced to tremendous extent.
- * In terms of bio-diversity many things have been achieved such as
- * - increase in awareness level of local community with respect to bio-diversity around and need for it_s conservation.
- * Various management strategies have been planned for conservation of bio-diversity in this region by way of live genebank, plantation of local diverse tree species etc.

- * The efforts have been taken up to regenerate bio-diversity in this region.
- * Land degradation & loss of natural resources was major problem earlier. Now with 5 years of inputs some amount of Green cover is reestablished.

A3 – Impacts on local community (social capital)

Implementation of Comprehensive Watershed development programme with Bio -diversity Conservation and Sustainable Agriculture component has benefited local community in many ways.

- * Local community has been organised with formation of Youth Mandals, Mahila Mandals, Watershed Community etc. so collective gain by collective action was made possible. This will be the strategy for future projects too.
- * Community got some economic benefits due to 1) Increase in availability of soil, water, vegetation, livestock and forest resources, 2) Standard of living has been improved due to rise in income due to local employment opportunities & practice of allied activities, 3) each type of user group got some or other benefit such as rise in income/rise in employment opportunities / reduced drudgery/human resource development due to education, training and experiential learning/increase in productivity of land or increase in cultivable land with very good yield. The extent of migration also has been reduced and people now plan to undertake various post watershed allied activities in their region.

A4 – Impacts on households and individuals (human capital)

- * Most of the private land owners_ houses have been benefited due to increase in soil fertility & ground water level which made them possible to cultivate their land variably and take good yield from these activities. Land less labourers got employment opportunities due to these programmes and entire community also identified their share in entire benefits of the project.
- * Individual households also benefited due to supportive income from activities such as collective vegetable farming, nursery raising, seed collection, fruit processing etc.
- * Successful implementation of programme also helped developing confidence among community.

A5 – Key changes in farm / regional system

Changes in input use:

- * Of late people have realized harmful consequences of chemical fertilizers & pesticides. Slowly they have started shifting towards organic farming. But this is very gradual.
- * Farmers have now been practicing vermiculture, mulching, green manuring & local seeds in their farming activities.

Change in local/ regional food security:

- * People have been made aware about various factors which pose threats to their local food security.
- * People have started taking effort by way of _ documentation of local bio-diversity with respect to vegetables, cereals, grasses, forest trees etc.
- * People have established local live gene banks.
- ?? Food security is also taken care of due to careful utilization of water & land resources.

- * Increase in ground water level.

- * Successful cultivation of different seasonal vegetables by tribal womens_ groups and its_

marketing to earn supportive income for family.

B. Types of Sustainable Agriculture Improvements

Type 1: Better use of available renewable natural capital

Type 2: Intensification of single sub -component of farm system

Type 3: Diversify by adding new productive natural capital and regenerative components

Type 4: Better use of non-renewable inputs and technologies

Type 5: Social and participatory processes leading to group action for making better use of natural capital

Type 6: Human capital building through training-learning programmes

Type 7: Access to Finance

Type 8: Add value by processing to reduce losses and increase returns

Type 9: Add value by direct or organised marketing of produce to consumers

	Yes/No	Narrative
Type 1	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Crop rotation * Alley / mixed cropping * Composting / vermicomposting * Optimum utilization of soil & water resources. * Kitchen Garden. * Crop planning & following crop calendar * Use of companion cropping * Mulching * Use of local traditional varieties & diverse cropping etc.
Type 2		
Type 3	x	* Use of Green manure
Type 4		
Type 5	x	<p>Various methodologies & processing were adopted which have been successful under some other case studies. Some processes have been evolved with experiences. General steps followed by RC includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensuring people's participation from inception of project-involving them in actual project planning, project preparation, project implementation and maintenance. * Adoption of PRA exercises * Respecting people's knowledge & its incorporation into planning. * Organising local community by way of training, awareness generation & exposure visits. * Formation of local groups of various types such as user group/SHGs, womens_ groups, mahila mandal, credit groups, tribal & landless labourers groups, youth mandals, various committees to take decisions and implement the project. RC just functions as a facilitator and it_s people who are actual implementers.
Type 6	x	
Type 7		

Type 8	x	Few steps have been taken up. Under project called "Agrifood development for the benefit of rural communities". Supported by IDRC where possibilities of value addition / better marketing have been identified in the form of
Type 9	x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Clean & cut vegetable packaging & selling etc. * Processing in the form of pickle etc. * Identifying various marketing channels * Skill, training & entrepreneurship development

C. Key Lessons: Success, Spread and Constraints

C1 – Key Lessons Learned

- * People_s participation decides success / failure of the project.
- * The real need for the project should come from people
- * Undertaking comprehensive approach is very crucial to understand inter linkages and cause & effect relationship among various components.
- * Practicing sustainable agriculture, although required and desired; will have to be a gradual process and not sudden shift from chemical to organic agriculture.

C2 – Aspects of local/national context contributing to success

RC has been working in this areas since 1976 & since RC had built up very good relationship with local community, their participation was not a problem & due to existence of NGO programme could be implemented more successfully. At national level, even Govt. department have also adopted watershed development as a right model for Rural development and hence various policies and rules have been changed in the favour of this comprehensive development programme.

With Globalization at international level people became more aware about bio-diversity related issues and hence coordination among research institutions, NGOs, educational bodies village communities & Govt. bodies was easily facilitated.

C3 – Limitations preventing spread

Lack of comprehensive approach towards Rural development on the part of Govt. / funding organisation results in undertaking of haphazard projects & link among various sector_s development is missed which hampers harmonious development of all interdependent sectors.

C4 – Policy issues

- * Economic viability is questionable and needs to be studied properly. Because there are very few cases where success has come without grants. If there are any, they needs to be replicated.
- * Gestation time required to get benefits once the project is implemented is too long & very few is willing to sacrifice those many years.
- * Lack of forward & backward linkages also prevents it_s spread.
- * Land laws of the country/state are sometimes problematic & creates problems in successful implementation of project.

C5 – Scaling-up

Needs:

- * Timely finance
- * Education & Training & awareness generation of communities & NGOs.
- * Proper coordination among all partners such as concerned Govt dept., educational institutes, technical institutes, private businesses, NGOs, students & communities.
- * A needbased programme / initiative developed on the basis of aspirations and requirements of various conflicting groups/user groups.
- * Availability of relevant training material which is easy, simple, illustrative & understandable.

D. Contact Point for Project/Initiative

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