

Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods

Project Number: N-IND-2017-0397

(April 2018 to March 2021)

**Implemented by
AF Ecology Centre**

Ananthapur District, Andhra Pradesh, INDIA



**Internal Evaluation through Staff Reflection on the
Achievements, Learning and Way Forward**

28 July to 6 August 2020

**A Report by
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6 August 2020**

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As a facilitator, I felt extremely privileged to undertake the evaluation of AF Ecology Centre's work on ***Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods*** in Ananthapur district, Andhra Pradesh. Due to covid 19 pandemic, the evaluation was carried out through reflective process consisting of focussed group discussions with the target communities and interactive discussions with the project team.

I would like to place my high appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the project target communities for sharing their experience, views, gaps and suggestions for the improvement. I sincerely thank the Director of AF Ecology Centre and the Project Team in the Central Office and from the field for their open discussions and excellent cooperation and support in carrying out the evaluation amidst inherent limitations due to covid 19.

I hope that the outcome of this evaluation will add value and strengthen the work of AF Ecology Centre in creating models in sustainable agricultural practices and diversified livelihoods in the district of Ananthapur which can be further replicated and up-scaled by the government and development players across the country.

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6 August 2020

Disclaimer

The report has been produced as an outcome of the evaluation process which involved especially the project team and the target groups in a limited manner due to covid 19 pandemic and lock down situation. The observations, analysis, findings and the recommendations are made in an objective manner with an aim to strengthen the efforts of AF Ecology Centre in promotion of sustainable agriculture and diversified livelihoods. The factual errors and omissions if any may be treated as unintended.

Abbreviations

AF	Accion Fraterna
AP	Andhra Pradesh
APDMP	Andhra Pradesh Drought Mitigation Project
APMC	Agricultural Produce & Livestock Market Committee
ASMS	Apex Sasya Mitra Samakhya
BftW	Bread for the World
BC	Backward Caste
CACO	Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices
CBO	Community Based Organization
CHC	Custom Hiring Centre
CMSA	Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture
CMSS	Community Managed Seed Systems
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
FFS	Farmer Field School
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FPO	Farmer Producer Organisation
FTA	Fixed Travel Allowance
GSMS	Grama Sasya Mitra Samakhya
HMV	Heavy Motor Vehicle
HR	Human Resources
ICRISAT	International Crop Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
LEISA	Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture
LMV	Light Motor Vehicle
MACS	Mutually Aided Cooperative Society
MARKFED	Cooperative Marketing Federation Limited
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MIS	Management Information System
MoAC&FW	Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare
MSMS	Mandal Sasya Mitra Samakhya
MSP	Minimum Support Price
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPM	Non Pesticide management
OC	Other Caste
OD	Organisational Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PME	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation
PPT	PowerPoint
RBK	Rythu Bharosa Kendra
REEIS	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability
SA	Sustainable Agriculture
SADL	Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods
SC	Scheduled Caste
SFAC	Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium
SMG	Sasya Mitra Group
ST	Scheduled Tribe
ToR	Terms of Reference
YSR	Yeduguri Sandinti Rajasekhara Reddy
ZBNF	Zero Budget Natural Farming

Internal Evaluation through Staff Reflection on the Achievements, Learning and Way Forward

30 July to 5 August 2020

1. Introduction

AF Ecology Centre has been implementing **Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods Programme (SADL)** since 2007-2008. From 1985, AF has been involved in Watershed Development Programmes and when large scale watershed programme was initiated by the government, the core focus got shifted to Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods. However, the Watershed Development Programmes continues with funding from Government agencies like NABARD and Ministry of Rural Development. The SADL is currently reached out to 214 villages covering 20000 drought affected families of rainfed farmers and farm labour and funded by the Bread for the World (BftW), Germany.

2. Framework Conditions

2.1. Background of the Project

The Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods (SADL) is being implemented by AF Ecology Centre in the drought prone, semi-arid district of Ananthapur in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The average annual rain fall in the district is 552 mm that again is spread sporadically and erratically. It is one of the most drought affected, poorest and arid districts in the country. The farming is mostly rain-fed and most of the farmers are small and marginal farmers from Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe, (ST), and Backward Caste (BC) communities with less than five acres of land. As the district frequently experiences severe drought conditions and repeated crop failures, high distress migration is experienced to cities like Bangalore and Hyderabad to work as unskilled labourers in hotels, construction sites, factories etc. Groundnut being the cash crop cultivated as a mono crop has been the choice of farmers in the area and the crop failures in succession put the farmer in a vicious cycle of indebtedness and poverty. The safety nets provided by government like crop insurance, input subsidy fall short of redressing the farmers' distress. There are other social consequences like distress migration, children dropping from the school, neglect of aged people, neglect of health, particularly of women, disintegration of families etc. Worst of all is the growing number of farmer suicides.



AF Ecology Centre has been promoting sustainable agriculture and supplementary income opportunities in order to have a livelihood security, which is very challenging given the harsh agro-climatic conditions and backwardness of the Ananthapur district. Due to relentless efforts, AF Ecology Centre has made a substantial contribution in promotion of rain-fed farming in the district. In the past few years, there has been a lot of research on technologies and practices of drought mitigation and climate resilient agriculture resulting in terms of improving rural livelihoods and in terms of collectivizing the target communities into institutions.

2.2. Project Area and Target Groups

The **project area** covers the most drought affected eight contiguous mandals out of the 63 mandals that make up the district - Atmakur, Kudair, Kalyanadurg, Beluguppa, Kundurpi, Settur, Dharmavaram and Rappthadu. Atmakur and Kudair Mandals receive the lowest rainfall in the district, 350 mm. The population in the project area is SC: 15%, ST: 3.5% and BC: 60%. There is not a single industry in the project area that provides employment to local youth. A few small-scale groundnut processing units that had existed have long since shut shop because of continuous crop failure and market uncertainty. The target groups cover both direct and indirect beneficiaries.



- Direct target - 26000 rural households in 230 villages in 8 mandals in Ananthapur (214 villages will be covered by SADL and 16 villages by the watershed programmes funded by NABARD and the Government of India). The preference is to single women, women-headed and disadvantage families of SC and ST communities.
- Indirect target – 60000 rural households in 230 project villages and another 600000 rural households in the district who benefit from the advocacy and promotional work

2.3. Project Goal, Outcomes, Outputs and Activities

Development Goal: Livelihood security for 86000 rural households living under extreme drought situation in 230 villages across 8 mandals of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh.

Project Objectives/Outcomes and Indicators

#	Project Objectives/Outcomes	Indicators
1	The members of every active SMG is aware and implement appropriate drought resistant agricultural measures promoted by AF on their rain fed lands	One-third of the members of every active SMG (approximately 6000 households) implement appropriate drought resistant measures on their rain fed lands and achieve a gain of at least 25% more relative to farming with conventional measures
2	Youth, women and socially disadvantaged groups benefit from non-farm livelihood opportunities and avenues for supplementing their income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number benefited through skill building, job placement, financial and market linkages • Number earning an income of Rs. 8000/- from outside employment more per month and number supplemented their income from an economic activity by Rs. 2000/- or more per month • At least a third of the beneficiaries are women and socially disadvantaged groups.
3	The leadership role of women and socially disadvantaged members (SC/ST/Single women headed households) within the CBO structure is strengthened	Growth in the level of participation in decision-making of women, SC/ST and single women headed households in decision-making at SMG, GSMS, MSMS and ASMS levels

The above objectives and indicators have undergone changes and mutually agreed between AF Ecology Centre and the Bread for the World:

Project Objective/Outcome: With the promotion of sustainable agriculture, drought mitigation and alternate livelihoods, food and livelihood security have improved in 230 villages of Ananthapur district.

Indicators

1. Atleast 30% of the target population has increased their income by 20% from which 50% are women
2. Atleast 50% skilled youth (girls and boys) have increased their income to average 60 Euro per month.

The following are the major activities to achieve the above objective and indicators:

1. Strengthening the existing CBOs at all levels
2. Promoting Mandal Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies
3. Promoting Sustainable Agriculture practices
4. Promoting Drought mitigation technologies
5. Skill building to rural youth and linking them to job market
6. Livelihood promotion through entrepreneurship
7. Public awareness building

2.4. Other Organisations

There are several NGOs in Ananthapur district promoting and strengthening rainfed farming through collectivization of farmers. The state promoted Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) is being implemented in the state on a large scale and AF is a part of this initiative. Another project of the government supported by IFAD, 'Andhra Pradesh Drought Mitigation Project (APDMP) has been implemented for the past two and half years and AF is one of the leading lead facilitating as well implementation organisations in the district. However, the government of Andhra Pradesh has winded up the role for NGOs in the project and the agricultural department is currently taking care of the project from August 2020 onwards. Most of the activities in APDMP are the experiments and technologies promoted by AF in rainfed conditions. The collectivization of farmers is at the focus now both by the government and the non-government organisations in the district as well in the state. AF has been associating with the both the government and non-government organisations in taking the agenda of rainfed farming and diversified livelihoods for the women, poor and vulnerable families in the district. In the context of covid 19 pandemic, the promotion of diversified farming and livelihood activities play an important role in ensuring adequate nutrition to the humans, livestock and in rebuilding livelihoods.

2.5. Risks and Assumptions

1. The programme activities are mostly dependent on crop-cycles of rainfed agriculture which in turn depend on weather conditions including rainfall
2. The use of output and the outcomes are also contingent on the pattern of rainfall and other factors which are beyond project control

3. Evaluation Methodology

The Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods (SADL) programme has been externally evaluated almost once in every three years and the last evaluation (fourth phase) was carried out in April 2017. The evaluation has also been proposed for the ongoing fifth phase of the project '**Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods (April 2018 to March 2021)**' as well as in accordance with the project contract between BftW and AF Ecology Centre. Due to covid 19 pandemic and lock down situation and Ananthapur district being high in having number of positive cases, the proposed external evaluation could not get materialized. Instead of full-fledged external evaluation, it was proposed to carry out an internal evaluation through a reflection process by the project team and the target communities whether the strategies and activities of the organization are leading to desired outcomes and impact and the suggestions for way forward.

3.1. Scope and Objectives of the Evaluation

The **scope of the evaluation** was constrained by the current context due to covid 19 pandemic and lock down situation. The staff visited the field and discussed with the target communities who got benefited from the SADL programme and collected the data. The staff administered the check list designed for the individual interviews and focused group discussions with SMGs, FPOs and women and youth.

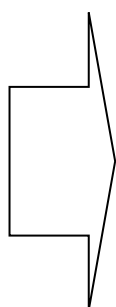
The following are the **objectives of the evaluation**:

1. Assess the relevance of the Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods programme in Ananthapur district, given its chronic drought-proneness, climate change, arid & semi arid agro-climate, together with the continuing crisis in rainfed agriculture and rural distress
2. Assess the effectiveness of the strategies, systems and activities of Drought Mitigation Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods
3. Assess the efficiency, learning and change in terms of project implementation in the past two years and three months (April 2018 to June 2020)
4. Assess the participatory approach and the people's institutions i.e., SMGs, their federations and FPOs at various levels (formal & informal) and their involvement in the programme.
5. Assess the impact of the programme in terms of benefits to farmers their level of awareness, knowledge, skills, practice and efficacy of the technologies and practices of Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods on the farmers
6. Assess the impact of alternate livelihood initiatives such as vocational trainings with undereducated rural youth and small businesses for women

7. Assess the gender aspect in project implementation and in the CBOs including in Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies (MACS) promoted by AFEC
8. Assess the role and impact of Ecology Centre in building public opinion and policy advocacy, including networking, collaboration with CSOs, academic & research organisations and the government agencies.
9. Make recommendations for the next phase proposal and a way forward

3.2. Evaluation Methodology and Tools

The methodology was bounded by the scope and the objectives of the evaluation and guided by the OECD-DAC “REEIS” (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) criteria and guidelines. The evaluation was carried out mainly through reflection and interactive sessions with the staff (physically and virtually) and focussed group discussions with the project beneficiaries and leaders of the community institutions. An enabling environment was created for everyone to articulate, share experience, express concerns and suggestions without any inhibitions. The entire process of the evaluation was facilitated by an external consultant. The ToR and the schedule for the evaluation was mutually discussed and agreed between the AF and the consultant. The evaluation was carried out at one stretch from 28 July to 3 August followed by report writing and submission of final report on 6 August 2020. The evaluation process consists of the following elements.



- Review of documents – project proposal, budget, six monthly reports, previous evaluation report
- Preparation of evaluation tools and checklists and translation
- Focused group discussions with SMG leaders, FPO leaders, women, youth and landless labour
- Interactive sessions with the staff (group discussions, brain storming, presentations, input sessions and individual sharing)
- Submission of a report

The evaluation tools used consist of check lists and questionnaires for focused group discussions and presentations on various themes (**annexure 1**). The methodology followed in selecting the target communities for focused group discussions is enclosed as **annexure 2** (separately for SMGs, FPOs and Women & Youth). The approach and methodology of the evaluation was to generate discussions and insights on the planned activities, strategies adopted and the achievements made with regard to “Sustainable Agriculture and Diversified Livelihoods” in 214 villages in 8 mandals of Ananthapur district in Andhra Pradesh. Necessary caution was undertaken to interpret without any bias, but there may be some factual errors due to the methodology adopted. The evaluation covered the programme implementation over two years three months (April 2018 to June 2020).

3.3. Limitations

Due to covid 19 pandemic and increasing cases of corona positives in the district, the following were the limitations:

- The field visit to the villages was not possible for meeting and interaction with the project target groups; to review the field level activities related to sustainable agriculture

and diversified livelihoods; to verify registers and records with the institutions of SMGs and FPOs

- The consultant was not able to have discussion with the all the members of field level team but with only selected staff members due to covid 19 pandemic
- It was also not possible to meet the other stakeholders such as government officials, research institutions, NGOs etc
- Limited time for the evaluation

3.4. Evaluation Schedule

Date	Schedule	Methodology
29.07.2020	Review of documents	Reading
30.07.2020	Preparation, finalisation and translation of checklist/tools	
31.07.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with the leaders and members of SMGs • Meetings with the leaders and members of FPOs • Meeting with the women and youth who benefited from diversified livelihoods 	Focused Group discussions as per the check list
01.08.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on project goal, objectives, activities, outcomes, indicators, budget utilisation, incorporation of previous evaluation recommendations • Presentation on the outcome of the FGDs with FPOs • Presentations on the outcome of the FGDs with SMGs • Presentation on MIS 	PPT presentation by Core team & interactions
02.08.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender & social inclusion • Group presentations by four groups and discussions • Presentation on diversified livelihoods – skill building • Presentation on diversified livelihoods - entrepreneurship • Presentation on human resources - organogram 	Group discussions as per the check list
03.08.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual exercise on issues of concerns and solutions • Discussions on possible changes for next phase • Discussion on the new strategies or modified strategies for the next phase • Discussion on the next phase proposal and take away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Index card display, grouping of issues and discussions • Brainstorming
04.08.2020 & 06.08.2020	Report writing and submission of a report	

In spite of the limitations due to covid 19 considerable level of interaction was held with the target communities through focused group discussions and participatory interactions held with the selective members of the project team. The virtual participation of the core team members in isolation (COO, MIS Coordinator, Training Coordinator and IBCB Coordinator) was also made possible. Due to social distancing, the selective members from the project team were drawn representing various mandals and components of work. The report is based on the presentations made and outcome of the in-depth discussions held with the team consisting of the Director, Technical Director, SADL Project Committee and field level staff. Utmost care and precaution was taken to present the report without any bias, however, there may be some fractural errors. The list of participants in field work and in a three-day reflection process is enclosed as **annexure 3 and 4** respectively.

4. Results

The project objective and indicators have undergone few changes in consultation with the Bread for the World. The achievement against the mutually agreed objective and indicators is detailed in the table below.

Planned Objective, Indicators and Achievements

Project Objective: With the promotion of sustainable agriculture, drought mitigation and alternate livelihoods, food and livelihood security have improved in 230 villages of Ananthapur district

Indicators	Achievement	Planned Activities	Achievements as on June 2020
At least 30% of the target population has increased their income by 20% from which 50% are women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6124 families (36.5% of 16772 families from 784 active SMGs in 218 villages) adopted more than 2 sustainable agriculture practices and increased their incomes by at least Rs 3000 (50 Euro) • More than 70% women farmers adopted sustainable Agriculture and Drought mitigation technologies • 52% of women are as Board of Directors in all 8 MACS and actively participated in implementing different program activities 	Promotion of CBOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of CBOs with monthly meetings, savings and credit • Participatory approach in planning and implementation of activities • Convergence with Government programs, Banks & Industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17565 SMG meetings as against 27375 • 3653 GSMS meetings as against 4186 • 177 MSMS/MACS meetings with attendance 70% and women participation was 72% as against 192 • Cumulative savings Rs. 68 million and 12,413 SMG members availed loans for improving their livelihoods, crop investments, children's education and health
		Sustainable Agriculture Practices & Drought Mitigation Technologies <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Farmer Field Schools 2. Demonstration plots on ZBNF Practices 3. Fodder Development 4. Protective Irrigation 5. Contingency crops 6. Fruit plants for gap filling 7. Kitchen Gardens 8. Farmer shops 9. Community Managed Seed System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 602 FFS sessions for farmers • 2385 farmers have taken up demonstration in 2522 acres • 305 families raised improved varieties of fodder in 521 acres • 660 farmers utilised protective irrigation technology and saved the crops from drought in 1836 acres • 6152 farmers benefitted with contingency crop in 15390 acres • 1084 farmers planted 24637 fruit saplings, as a measure of drought mitigation and improving vegetation • 1059 families raised kitchen gardens and consumed a variety of vegetables including leafy vegetables • 8 MACS started Farmer Shops and sold tarpaulins, contingency seeds, 3 layer bags, cycle weeders etc to the farmers; also procured groundnut seed for AP State Seed Distribution Company Limited

Indicators	Achievement	Planned Activities	Achievements as on June 2020
At least 50% skilled youth (girls and boys) have increased their income to average 60 Euro per month	934 rural youth (335 women and 599 men) were given skill trainings in various trades and of them 511 (55%) were employed with income to average Rs.5000/- to 8000/- (60 Euro) per month	Diversified/Alternate Livelihoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in LMV & HVM driving • Training on two wheeler mechanism • Training on mobile phone mechanism • Advanced Training on Garment Making • Facilitating bank linkages & market linkages for women to set up garment making units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 317 rural youth were trained on LMV driving out of which 180 are employed • 117 men were trained in HVM training out of which 63 are employed • 116 young men were trained in two wheeler mechanism out of which 78 are employed • 86 youth trained in mobile phone mechanism out of which 57 are employed • 42 rural women were provided training on cooking millet food items and 20 women have started preparing millet snacks and selling in market. • 256 young rural women were provided training on garment making and support was provided to interested women in setting up garment making units. About 113 women employed were provided employment in Garment industry.

4.1. Relevance

Rainfed agriculture is predominant in arid and semi-arid regions of the country like India since such regions are home to about 81% of rural poor. About 60% of the net sown area is rainfed contributing 40% of total food grain production and supports 2/3 of the livestock population. Small and marginal farmers depending upon rainfed farming are resource poor and risk averse. The aberrant behaviour of monsoon rainfall, eroded and degraded soils with multiple nutrient and water deficiencies, declining ground water table and poor resource base of the farmers are major constraints for low and unstable yields in rainfed areas. In addition, climate variability including extreme weather events resulting from global climate change poses serious threat to rainfed agriculture.

The project operational area Ananthapur district falls under drought and desert-prone agro-climatic zone of Deccan plateau also known as “Rain Shadow Area”. Here a mere 15% of the cultivated area of 2.8 million acres is under irrigation and the rest of 85% (2.38 million acres) is under rainfed, which chronically drought prone.

Hence promotion of sustainable agriculture and diversified livelihoods has a crucial role to play in sustaining the economy and food security. Ananthapur district being semi-arid, drought prone and deprived of alternate livelihood opportunities due to lack of industries and service sector, the efforts towards improving sustainable agriculture and diversified livelihoods through strengthening of community institutions is very relevant to address and overcome multifarious problems and minimize the risk to cope up harsh agro-climatic conditions and weather aberrations. The climate change is aggravating the droughts and impacting adversely the rainfed farmers and the landless.

The target communities of rainfed farmers and landless labour are highly vulnerable due to high risk involved in their agricultural operations. The specific strategies for rainfed farmers, landless and the irrigated farmers are highly relevant since differential approach is essential given the context and the climate variability. Agricultural operations alone cannot ensure livelihood security in a district like Ananthapur and hence promotion of diversified livelihood activities in non-farm sector also is highly relevant and essential to augment supplementary income to the families so as to reduce the distress migration. AF has developed location-specific improved technologies based on evidence to overcome the constraints and for enhancing the farm productivity in the rainfed farming such as a new variety of seeds, pre-monsoon sowing, protective irrigation, soil and water conservations measures etc. The natural farming that is being promoted by AF Ecology Centre is the key effort to increase the soil organic matter to fight drought.

In the current context of covid 19 pandemic and continued lock down situation, the interventions being promoted through SADL programme is very valid and essential since the poor resource farmers are affected severely. However, the interventions for the landless poor need to be revisited and made more relevant in the operational areas as their lives are in huge crisis. The landless require more of off-farm and non-farm interventions and these can be strategized as relevant to the needs of the landless. Differential measures developed by AF Ecology Centre for rainfed and irrigated farmers are more relevant; however, the basket of activities need to be differentiated for both the sections of rainfed and irrigated farmers.

The activities ranked as most relevant by the target communities are cycle weeder, protective irrigation & pump sets, row water sowing, pre monsoon sowing, demonstration plots, contingency seeds, savings at SMG level, small business loans for women, 3 layer bags, silage storage, tarpaulins, seed procurement and distribution, mango plants for gap filling and lining to farm ponds. The communities also wanted some changes in some of the activities such as motor to be fixed for cycle weeder and new activities such as subsidy to purchase small ruminants, poultry, drums, secateurs, stone remover, etc. The non-farm interventions in terms of skill-building for driving and two wheeler repairs seem to be relevant but the reach out is only 50% and the relevant strategies need to be worked out to create awareness on the opportunities and to link the trainees with the employment opportunities.

The relevance of strategies and activities implemented by AF Ecology Centre is absolutely valid and will be relevant for coming years as well. The strategies and interventions work well during good rainfall seasons and years. During monsoon failure years, the efforts need to be augmented with relief support to enable the rural communities to cope up with the severe drought and distress situation. Hence lot of flexibility is required to alter the strategies as per the rainfall and weather conditions prevailing in the district.

4.2. Effectiveness

The effectiveness of various interventions and activities varies based on monsoon variability and the consequent realities prevailing. The following table captures the status of the various activities planned and implemented during the two years from April 2018 to March 2020.

#	Project Activities	Measure	Target 2 years	Achieved 2 years	Per-cent
1	Promotion of CBOs				
1.1	CBO Meetings				
1.1.1	Sasya Mitra Group Monthly review meetings 856 SMGs* 12 Meetings*per year)	Meetings	20,544	17,708	86
1.1.2	Grama Sasya Mitra Samakhya review Meetings (230 Villages*12 Meetings*per year)	Meetings	5,520	3,224	58
1.1.3	Mandal Sasya Mitra Samakhya review Meetings (8 MSMS*12 meetings *per year (50 members)	Meetings	192	158	82
1.1.4	Apex Sasya Mithra Samakhya (ASMS) review Meetings (4 meetings per year) 50 members	Meetings	8	4	50
1.1.5	Field monitoring by MSMS/ASMS (46 Clusters*2 visits*per year)	Monitoring	184	27	15
1.2	Capacity Building of CBOs				
1.2.1	Trainings to MSMS Members on leadership, gender, drought mitigation - 8 mandals*2 per year	Trainings	32	17	53
1.2.2	Village level trainings to SMGs on leadership, gender & drought mitigation - 230 trainings /year	Trainings	460	436	95
1.2.3	Farmers Field School - training to facilitators (8 mandals* 2 trgs*per year (30 members)	FFS	32	70	219
1.2.4	FFS sessions at cluster level - 46 clusters*per year	FFS	92	752	817

1.3	Promoting Mandal Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies				
1.3.1	Two day training on Governance (8 MACS*2years)	Trainings	16	16	100
1.3.2	Two day training on Business 8 MACS*2 year	Trainings	16	16	100
1.3.3	Support to setup processing & marketing 8 MACS	MACS	8	8	100
1.3.4	Exposure to Successful MACS - 8 MACS*2 years	Visits	16	16	100
1.3.5	Annual General Body Meeting - 8MACS*2 years	Meetings	16	16	100
1.3.6	Custom Hiring Centre Support to 8 MACS	MACS	8	8	100
1.3.7	Audit/ MIS & office management - 8 MACS*2 years	MACS	16	16	100
1.4	Sustainable Agricultural Practices				
1.4.1	Demonstrations on drought resilient crop and cropping systems (5 farmers*230 villages)	Demo plots	2,300	2,777	121
1.4.2	Natural Farming practices in Irrigated lands in Rabi season (5 per village*230 villages)	Demo plots	2,300	710	31
1.4.3	Demonstration on Fodder 46 clusters*5 acres/year	Acres	460	541	118
1.4.4	Kitchen garden & Backyard horticulture (230 villages* 10 families*per year)	Family	4,600	959	21
1.5	Demonstrations on SA and Drought Mitigation				
1.5.1	Fodder storage demo 46 clusters*2 bags*per year	clusters	184	-	
1.5.2	Contingency Crops 20000 acres per year	Acres	40,000	25,821	65
1.5.3	Row water sowing - 46 clusters* 5 acres per year	Acres	460	672	146
1.5.4	Lining of farm ponds for enabling protective irrigation - 276 farm ponds per year	Farm ponds	552	41	7
1.5.5	Protective Irrigation Equipment (Pipes, Emitters, motors etc) 46 Clusters * 5 villages per year	villages	460	1,082	235
2	Diversified / Alternate Livelihoods				
2.1	Trainings in skill building				
2.1.1	LMV Driving - 400 trainees per year	Trainees	800	284	36
2.1.2	HMV Driving - 150 trainees per year	Trainees	300	101	34
2.1.3	Two wheeler Mechanism - 200 per year	Trainees	400	96	24
2.1.4	Cell phone mechanism - 200 per year	Trainees	400	86	22
2.2	Livelihood promotion through entrepreneurship				
2.2.1	Training on Garment Making - 400 women/year	Trainees	800	333	42
2.2.2	Support to setup Micro enterprises for Distressed Women - 100 women per year	Trainees	200	201	101
2.2.3	Trainings by other Institutions 200 trainees/year	Trainees	400	143	36
2.2.4	Linking with Employment providers 12 per year	Trainees	24	24	100
3	Public Awareness Building				
3.1	Public Campaigns - 4 campaigns per year	Campaign	8	16	200
3.2	Public Campaigns 1 campaign at Central level	Campaign	2	2	100
3.3	OD (Trainings & Meetings)	Trainings	1	-	-
3.4	OD sessions - 50 members	Trainings	2	3	150
3.5	MIS - Verdant Software trainings to staff	Trainings	24	12	50
3.6	Staff meetings.12 per year	Meetings	24	24	100
3.7	Staff exposure visits to other organisations	Exposure	2	2	100

The project has been effective in creating awareness and knowledge among the project target groups on sustainable agriculture, drought mitigation and diversified livelihoods. The collectivization of target communities into informal and formal institutions has yielded results since the members of these community institutions are now able to negotiate with the system to avail their entitlements and doing the follow up on their own. There is also increased collective action and collaboration among the target communities and their institutions horizontally and vertically to avail larger benefits.

There is high demand from the communities for activities like protective irrigation, cycle welders, kitchen gardens, seeds, row water sowing, demo plots, lining of farm ponds, CMSS activities, FPO business activities etc. These activities are effectively implemented and the outcomes achieved resulted in replication of these activities by other NGOs and the government. The participation of women is more than 50 percent across various activities; however the data is not available for all activities but only for selected activities. Similarly the participation of SC and ST seems explicit in diversified livelihoods related activities and the data is not available for all the activities.

The project monitoring seems to be effective for selective activities and not uniform across all the activities, though the monthly planning is very systematic, which takes place with the involvement of all the staff. From the table it is evident that some of the targets are not achieved as against the plan due to various reasons given below:

- Severe drought during the year 2018-2019 and continued dry spells
- Delayed monsoon during the year 2019-2020
- Staff turnover and PME unit was under staffed
- Gaps in the data collected and non availability of certain data
- Less participation of community institutions
- Lack of required capacities for the implementation team
- Distress migration
- Gaps in the follow up and tracking of progress of activities implemented
- Lack of gender and caste disaggregated data across all activities
- Time gap between actual planning and implementation of the activity
- Volatile prices for agricultural produce especially for tomato and groundnut
- No trainings separately for women, SC and SC target groups and leaders
- Community/FPO assets are not yet under the control of FPOs
- 10 to 15% of the beneficiaries are not interested in any of the activities

The above gaps need to be addressed to increase the effectiveness of various activities and to achieve the expected results.

4.3. Efficiency

The efficiency of the programme was assessed based on the budget utilisation, human resources deployed and targets achieved in two years of time. The budget for three years and utilisation for two years from April 2018 to March 2020 is given below:

Budget Utilisation for Two years (April 2018 to March 2020) - Rupees					
Budget Code	Budget Item	Budget (2018-2021)	Expenditure (01.04.2018 to 31.03.2020)	Balance	% of Utilisation
1	Project activities				
1.1	Promotion CBOs	5,905,200	4,525,427	1,379,773	76.63
1.2	Sustainable Agriculture Practices	2,101,600	1,920,697	180,903	91.39
1.3	Demonstrations on SA and Drought Mitigation	11,351,600	5,162,942	6,188,658	45.48
1.4	Diversified/ Alternate Livelihoods	8,591,400	5,843,694	2,747,706	68.02
1.5	Public Awareness Building	4,536,200	2,626,952	1,909,248	57.91
1.6	OD (Trainings and Meetings)	5,579,600	4,044,259	1,535,341	72.48
2	Personnel				
2.1	Total Programme Staff				
2.1.1	Director	2,131,200	1,346,277	784,923	63.17
2.1.2	Personnel Executive level	4,528,800	2,677,941	1,850,859	59.13
2.1.3	Personnel Management level	4,240,200	2,525,817	1,714,383	59.57
2.1.4	Field Staff	31,339,000	22,655,708	8,683,292	72.29
2.2	Total Administration Staff				
2.2.1	Finance Director	1,509,600	894,736	614,864	59.27
2.2.2	Campus Manager	836,200	562,746	273,454	67.30
2.2.3	Support Staff	5,712,800	2,519,403	3,193,397	44.10
3	Administration				
3.1	Mandal field offices (rent, electricity, internet, office material etc.,)	3,034,000	2,109,377	924,623	69.52
3.2	Central office (rent, electricity, telecommunication, bank charges, taxes etc.,)	10,448,800	6,824,260	3,624,540	65.31
3.3	FTA allowances to Staff	3,515,000	2,210,892	1,304,108	62.90
3.4	Audit Costs	370,000	272,185	97,815.00	73.56
3.5	Vehicles rent	9,568,200	3,393,334	6,174,866	35.46
4	Procurement				
4.1	Vehicle	1,480,000	2,503,400	1,023,400	169.15
4.3	Furniture	488,400	417,100	71,300	85.40
4.4	Computer, Camera and Printers	740,000	794,111	54,111	107.31
4.5	Rain gage equipment	399,600	440,180	40,580	110.16
4.6	Tractor Tanker	547,600	610,690	63,090	111.52
6	Evaluations				
6.1	External evaluation	1,013,800	0	1,013,800	0
7.1	Reserve*	5,638,800	0	5,638,800	0
Total budget (3 yr) & expenses (2 yes)		125,607,603	76,882,132	48,725,472	61.21

The overall budget utilisation shows the efficiency in spending. The items which are under-utilized are; demonstrations on sustainable agriculture and drought mitigation activities; creating public awareness; support staff and vehicle rent. Whereas the budget meant for

vehicle is over utilized by 169% in two years. The functioning of central office and the field offices are efficiently managed with necessary systems in place. The human resource cost at the field level could come under programme cost and central office team and admin staff can come under project coordination cost, otherwise the human resources cost looks higher, which is not true in this case. The budget items towards various field level activities are cost effective and a closer look to reduce the human resource cost is essential particularly the budget for field staff. They need to be replaced with the village level volunteers in a phased manner and this results in more ownership and participation of community institutions as well sustainability. The staff turnover of the field level staff is high due to reasons such as – lack of efficient hand holding, staff unable to cope up with the travel, night meetings in the villages and the overall work pressure. The field level staff members are mostly young women and hence another reason for turnover is gender barrier – parents prefer the daughters to get married and settle down in married life.

The planning of targets is very systematic, however the implementation is delayed which affects the efficiency. Most of the activities are during the khariff and rabi season and the delay in execution means, delay in the entire cycle of activities during the year. It is essential that the plan is done well in advance to ensure the timely implementation since the monsoon is highly unpredictable. The MIS needs to be streamlined to create evidence and also to reduce the burden of manual maintenance of registers and records at various levels. The data gap in MIS needs to be addressed immediately and rectified. The role and responsibilities of all the staff need to be assessed, redefined and issued fresh job descriptions which would result in higher efficiency. The cost towards sustainable agriculture, drought mitigation and diversified livelihoods could include the field level and their travel and hence budget reorganization under appropriate components is essential.

4.4. Impact

The impact assessment is possible if there is a baseline available for the activities or else data available for the control plots/environment. However from the focused group discussions with the project target groups and the staff indicate that the SADL programme has definitely created an impact among the target groups, the staff and the stakeholders such as the government, research institutions, NGOs and other key players in promotion of climate resilient agriculture and alternate livelihoods to the rural communities. AF Ecology Centre is always being invited by the state government and the line departments to provide necessary advice and strategic guidance in terms of policy formulation and implementation.

4.5. Sustainability

There are certain sustainability factors built in the programme such as institutional sustainability and knowledge-cum-practice sustainability. The various institutions (both informal and formal) promoted and strengthened is the prime factor to ensure sustainability of the programme. These community institutions ensure collectivization of farmers and landless, their participation and ownership in the project activities. The institutions are emerging as self managed and self regulated entities and are on the right path and soon would to become sustainable in their operations with minimum facilitation and hand-holding from AF Ecology Centre.

Keeping in view of climate change and its adverse effect on the small landholders and rainfed farming, the practices promoted by AF Ecology Centre are sustainable in nature and most of the activities are evidence based. A basket of measures around drought proofing and drought-resilient practices would be easily be adopted by the rainfed and small landholding farmers in the district and across several districts become sustainable given the current policy environment for promotion of rainfed farming and climate resilient agriculture.

The area of focus is to capacitate the farmer producer organizations to take business activities in a systematic manner based on market analysis on demand and supply of agricultural produce. The FPOs are to be linked with government and various service providers for availing advisory services, package of practices, digital technology, value addition techniques, marketing facilitates, capacity building, financial services, transport, knowledge management services, etc.

AF Ecology Centre is successful in mobilizing resources now and then from the government which complements and creates synergic impact in the project villages. However the support from the government is normally unpredictable and hence dependency on the government funds is a risk factor for the organization (APDMP is the best example).

Another area of focus shall be creating linkages horizontally and vertically to ensure synergy and complementarities among the institutions promoted. The viable business activities and the knowledge and advisory services provided by the institutions to its members would pave way for sustainability.

5. Recommendations and Conclusions

The following are the key recommendations for the rest of the ongoing programme and for next phase starting from April 2021 onwards.

1. **Social and Institutional Capital:** There are four types of informal institutions and two types of formal institutions. These institutions need to be strengthened and streamlined to build the social and institutional capital for availing larger economies of scale for its members. The two domains – governance and business – need to be strengthened with defined roles and responsibilities. Grading tool is to be administered to rate the institutions based on the parameters such as membership, participation, ownership, gender and social inclusion, systems adopted, leadership rotation, regular meetings, business transactions, services provided to members, social responsibility etc. The grading helps to address the gaps in making the institutions becoming sustainable. The organogram and the roles and responsibilities for these community organisations need to be discussed and defined. The capacity building shall be based on needs assessment and on a continuous basis relevant to the context. Measures to be instituted to increase the participation and ownership of members through member awareness and planning and implementation of activities. Training calendar is required to organise a series of trainings to strengthen the community institutions.

The SMGs have more than Rs.80 million as their savings and this internal capital needs to be utilized for economic and livelihood activities of the members. Besides, these

informal institutions need to be linked with formal institutions such as MACS and Apex of MACS for undertaking collective marketing of input and output business.

2. **Planning and Implementation:** The community institutions need to take care of the entire gamut of activities related to sustainable agriculture and drought mitigation – planning, implementation, monitoring, maintaining data base and reporting are to be taken care of by the institutions at various levels. This can be experimented with 10 to 15 percent of matured institutions in each mandal and based on the learning; further steps are to be taken up to make community institutions responsible.
3. **Multi-fold Strategies:** It is necessary to strategize specific set of interventions for the landless, rainfed and irrigated farmers. The same set of activities will not be appropriate since the level playing ground varies among these categories of target communities. The budgeting is also to be done separately for each of these categories with equal focus on the landless and the rainfed farmers and a strategic focus on the irrigated farmers. The target groups who are not poor but are the members of SMGs could be strategically positioned so that they do not disrupt the decision making processes.
4. **Location Specific Strategies:** All the eight mandals are not the same in their socio-economic contest and the political environment. The mandals closer to Ananthapur town have a different socio-political economy than the interior mandals. The former mandals can have more budget allocated for diversified livelihoods and the latter mandals with more of sustainable agriculture and drought mitigations measures. Machines for removal of stones at the CHC and cluster level could be planned since this need is expressed by the communities. Other specific activities could be promotion of indigenous livestock, small ruminants, technology up-gradation to cycle weeder, etc
5. **Innovations and Models:** Model Plots for demonstration of all experiments and innovative experiments need to be promoted in specific clusters so that the learning from multiple activities at one site and the changes in the enhancement of production, productivity, profitability, soil health etc could be studied and evidence created with a package /basket of activities. The promotion of nutrition sensitive agriculture and climate resilient practices needs to be scaled up.
6. **Business Activities:** The FPOs have laid a strong foundation; however, it is a long way to go to become viable business organizations. The demand for various inputs (seed, feed, tools, implements, small machineries, technology etc) need to be studied and the FPOs to take measures for collective procurement of various inputs and distribution to its members and non-members. The system for sharing profit with the shareholders needs to be defined. The services available for members and non-members also need to be defined in terms of priority and cost. No credit shall be entertained from the beginning. Similarly the output marketing for groundnut, red gram, tamarind, millets, green gram etc needs to be taken up by the FPOs, The collection centers, primary processing centres, transport facilities, custom hiring centers are essential for FPOs to expand its business activities. The linkages with the agriculture and other line departments and also with agencies like Markfed, e-NAM, e-Fresh etc are to be established for leveraging resources and undertaking business activities.

7. **Convergence:** Maximum efforts need to be undertaken to converge within the organisation among its other programmes being implemented, and with the line departments for availing schemes, subsidies and technical support and also with other NGOs and networks implementing similar programmes. The outcome of the convergence needs to be recorded and reported.
8. **Diversified Livelihoods:** Field survey and the need assessment are to be done to better understand the demand for acquiring various skills and knowledge on various trades. More publicity needs to be created to mobilize rural youth and women to avail the opportunities of various skills trainings and support for initiating entrepreneurial activities. One or two new trades could be introduced such as repair of home appliances, electrical wiring, plumbing etc and support to start ups such as snacks making, bakery, reusable products etc. The bank linkages need to be facilitated for those who start their own business /entrepreneurial activity. The SMG savings could also be utilized for providing loans for livelihoods.
9. **PME:** The planning is very systematic and the monitoring needs to be improved considerably. The line management monitoring and the centralized monitoring by the PME team needs to be defined clearly. The six monthly reviews need to be focused on evaluating the achievements in terms of outputs and outcomes. The activities grounded and their functioning needs to be tracked and followed up. The data shall come from the bottom and to be validated by MTLs before sending to the MIS in-charge. The MIS reports and data need to be kept in a way for any staff to have open access. The data shall always have stratification of information based on gender, equity and economic categories. The multiple benefits availed by farmers shall be collected and reported to avoid any duplication of reporting. Indicators shall be always measurable and reporting such as mostly, less, more etc should be avoided.

The immediate focus is to be streamlining and training the staff on the software application. The formats for collection of data need to be discussed and finalized so as to avoid collection of unnecessary data and ensure timely data collection and generation of reports for review and course correction. The disaggregated data in terms of gender, social inclusion (SC, ST, BC and OC) and economic inclusion (small, marginal, and big farmers) for each of the activities shall be made as non-negotiable.

10. **Human Resources:** The staff strength at field level needs to be revisited and to be reduced / replaced with community volunteers and the process is to take place in a phased manner. The organogram clearly depicting the staff structure at various levels needs to be prepared and the job description is also to be discussed and revised for ensuring effectiveness and efficiency of staff. The centrally located support services such as finance, HR, admin, research and PME shall be accountable downward with clear definition of responsibilities. Further the following are recommended:
 - Mechanism for smooth transition and handing over formalities when staff resign
 - Bring in healthy competition among the staff
 - Suggestion box/ grievance cell for staff to share their concerns and problems
 - Workload assessment and equal distribution of work among the staff
 - Measures to retain the staff especially the women staff
 - Capacity building needs assessment and training to staff on a continuous process
 - Separate staff for MIS so that the person is not entrusted with other responsibilities

11. **Budget Utilisation:** It is recommended to prepare the budget defining the measure, unit cost, units per year for each of the activities. The core team consisting of finance, programme and PME needs to review the budget utilisation on a quarterly basis and take necessary course correction for efficient spending. When activities are directly implemented by the community institutions, the system of reimbursement or paying directly to the vendors need to be defined clearly and practiced as non negotiable. The budgeting also needs to be reorganized between the HR cost and programme cost.
12. **Knowledge Management:** The experience and the outcomes of the innovative experiments and demonstrations need to be systematically documented and disseminated to wider audience for replication. The evidences need to be used for advocating with the state and national governments for promotion and strengthening of rainfed farming in the country. The policy advocacy shall focus on equity grant, business capital and subsidized infrastructure and equipments for FPOs, role of women farmers in decision making and support required, linkage with RBKs and other initiatives of the government and subsidized schemes for rainfed farmers and landless communities.
13. **Digital Technology:** Explore the usage of communication technology and digital platforms for data collection, reporting, providing virtual trainings to staff and target groups, online procurement and marketing, providing advisory services to farmers and for monitoring and reviewing. The dashboard needs to be displayed and shared on a day-to-day basis and necessary reports need to be generated for monthly planning, review and course correction if necessary.
14. **Social Responsibility:** It is essential to inculcate the social responsibility and sensitivity among the SMGs and FPOs towards the poor, women-headed families, physically challenged, vulnerable and the landless and also during the situations like covid pandemic or any natural disaster. Also ensure that Gender, Social Inclusion, Participatory Approach, Convergence shall remain as cross cutting themes and non-negotiable values for the organisations.

AF Ecology Centre is highly valued for its contribution to rainfed farming and drought mitigation not only in Ananthapur district but by the state government, line departments and the other NGOs. The transparent and accountable practices adopted make the organisation highly valued by both primary and secondary stakeholders. The trust and faith instituted by the communities on the organization is deep-rooted. The leadership of the organisation is highly respected in the government and the development sector. The organisation is always open to new ideas and experimenting for the benefit of the communities those who are vulnerable and deprived in many aspects. The role of organizations like AF Ecology Centre is imperative and crucial in reducing the poverty and inequalities in the society and in achieving gender just and inclusive society.

6. Way Forward – Next Phase

In depth discussions were held on the next phase of the proposal. The brainstorming session held with the staff and senior management team resulted in mapping the eco system and discussions on how to make a difference in the next phase in order to be always relevant, effective and efficient towards achieving maximum impact on the project target groups and stakeholders. It was felt the a preamble is put down clearly defining sustainable

agriculture and drought mitigation activities in terms of concept and the nature of activities. This needs to be disseminated among the staff, target communities and other stakeholders so that the stand of the AF Ecology Centre is explicit and clearly understood by both primary and secondary stakeholders.

Eco-system Mapping

- In the Union budget of 2019-20, the Government of India has declared its intention to promote 10,000 FPOs in the next 5 years so as to ensure economies of scale for farmers in the country. A New Central Sector Scheme titled "Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organization (FPOs)" has been approved by the Cabinet on 19.02.2020 and officially launched on 29.02.2020 by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 29 February, 2020. The Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium will be the nodal agency and one of the implementing agencies. FPO Operational Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (MoAC&FW) in July 2020.
- The Government of Andhra Pradesh has established a Village Secretariat for every population of 2000 to ensure delivery of services reach people in the villages and also to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system. The village secretariat is acting as a bridge between the government and the people by rendering various types of services at their door step. The government has appointed one volunteer for every 50 households.
- The Government of Andhra Pradesh has also launched the YSR Rythu Bharosa Scheme (RBK) for farmers on 15 October 2019. Eligible farmers can avail various inputs such as seed, fertilizers, seedlings and other facilities online and zero interest loans. The scheme aims to empower the farmers with financial assistance to improve their agricultural practices. The newly set up RBKs will have digital Kiosks and an App to help farmers know the real time market price. Kiosks would provide information on market intelligence, market prices, and information on procurement centres, weather forecast and other services. The Agriculture, AP Agros, AP Seeds, Horticulture, Sericulture, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry departments will jointly monitor the functioning of RBKs.
- The Government of Andhra Pradesh is also planning to launch Janata Bazaras, more godowns for storing, grading and packing, transport facilities, market intelligence, availability of land records
- The transport restrictions are removed on the agricultural produce and now can be marketed anywhere in the country - One Country, One Market!
- The National Policy for Farmers 2007 has rightfully mentioned women as farmers including cultivators on own lands or family owned lands, share croppers or tenants, dependent of forests, pastoralists, livestock-rearers and agricultural labourers. Special emphasis has been given on the role and contribution of women in the context of doubling the income of farmers by 2022 and the government is to allocate 30% of funds under various schemes to bring women in the agriculture mainstream
- In the context of feminization of agriculture, women play an increasingly prime role in farming as more men are migrating to urban areas in search of work and hence there is a great need and urgency to adopt gender specific interventions

- Special provisions are made available under various national schemes such as National Mission on Agriculture and Technology; Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture; Integrated Scheme for Agriculture Marketing; National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture; Mission on Agriculture Mechanization, National Rural Livelihood Mission; etc
- The semi-arid regions like Ananthapur district is witnessing the impact of climate change in the form of drought, delayed and untimely monsoon, high temperature etc and the focus is on adopting climate resilient mitigation and adaptation measures in agricultural sector in the country
- National Agriculture Market (eNAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandals to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India. The e-platform has evolved to meet the lockdown-led procurement challenges with 585 mandis across 16 states including in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Every traders at an eNAM mandis on the portal through the mobile App or website and places the bid and the system identifies the highest bid for each lot of the farmer. A trader cannot revise or cancel once a bid is submitted.
- eFresh Agribusiness Solutions has conceived a SMART and SAFE Farming Platform as a One Stop Shop for all Farmers needs, Knowledge and Market Linkages for Farm Produce using TRADITIONAL and TECHNOLOGY Interventions. eFresh is supported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and International Crop Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).
- Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices. The minimum support prices are announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season for certain crops on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). MSP is price fixed by Government of India to protect the producer - farmers - against excessive fall in price during bumper production years. The minimum support prices are a guarantee price for their produce from the Government. The major objectives are to support the farmers from distress sales and to procure food grains for public distribution. In case the market price for the commodity falls below the announced minimum price due to bumper production and glut in the market, government agencies purchase the entire quantity offered by the farmers at the announced minimum price. The groundnut and red gram can be procured under MSP.
- The banks and financial institutions are now increasingly coming forward to provide loans to the farmer organizations and the wholesale and retail market players also now directly providing opportunities to the farmers' institutions to market their perishable and non-perishable commodities.
- The mobility and negotiation power of women have considerably enhanced and they are prepared to take up new roles and responsibilities across the agricultural value chain

- There are ample opportunities to link the various government programmes such as MGNREGS, tank renovation etc for the interventions required for productivity enhancement, particularly those of small and marginal farmers.
- The challenges in agriculture are complex in nature and magnitude especially due to increased cost of cultivation, adverse effect of climate change, depleting groundwater and soil cover. It is also evident that mostly small, marginal and women farmers got more adversely affected by these issues. However, many facets of sustainable farming like ZBNF (Zero Based Natural Farming), NPM (Non Pesticide management), CMSA (Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture), IPM (Integrated Pest Management) and LEISA (Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture) can be converged for the benefit of the farmers.

The following areas were identified in order to strengthen the community institutions, rainfed farming through climate resilient agriculture and diversified livelihoods.

What would be different in the next phase proposal (April 2021 -March 2024)?

1. Transfer of responsibilities to SMGs and higher level institutions – planning, implementation, spending, tracking progress and reporting on activities accomplished, outputs and outcomes. This can be with 10 to 15% of the institutions to start with.
2. CBOs play a considerable role in planning, monitoring and evaluation
3. Design different strategies rainfed farmers, irrigated farmers, landless labour
4. Regarding sustainable agriculture, our bottom line is ‘we don’t use agro-chemicals’ and the message will be made clear to all stakeholders.
5. Identify two or three activities for action research and creating evidence
6. Data collection, report generation and review on outputs and outcomes every six months
7. Gender and equity segregation for all activities
8. Change in staff organogram with clearly defined role and responsibilities
9. Indirect beneficiary monitoring
10. Using more of communication technologies and online platforms
11. Address marketing problems with regard to millets
12. Linking Bhoomatha FPO with Dharmavaram FPO and MSMS with MACS

Next Phase Proposal

#	Preparatory Activities	Timelines	Responsibility
1	Need Analysis & current eco-system mapping	07.08-2020	Kalamani & Brahmesh
2	Results Framework - Goal & Objectives, Activities, Outputs and Outcomes	10.08.2020	Director
3	Objective 1: Institutions (Governance & Business linkages & Program implementation)	08.08.2020	Rajasekhar, Bhaskar Babu, Rudraiah

4	Objective 2: Sustainable Agriculture ((Landless, Rainfed, Irrigated, Action Research, Policy Advocacy, Demo Models, new initiatives)	08.08.2020	TYR, Rudraiah, MTLs
5	Objective 3: Non-farm Livelihoods (skill building in more trades, nano-enterprises, credit and market linkages)	08.08.2020	Rizwana, Mohiuddin
6	Cross cutting themes (Gender, Equity, Convergence, participatory approach)	08.08.2020	Rizwana, Sujatha,
7	Staff Structure (Organogram, roles and responsibilities, reporting systems)	08.08.2020	Brahmesh, Fazlulla
8	MIS & PME (targets, input tracking, segregation of data, quantitative & qualitative outputs, measure use of outputs and outcomes, tools and methods for OIO, monitoring systems)	08.08.2020	Murali, Rudraiah, Sujatha, PME Associates
9	Budget (% for each outcome and activities)	07.08.2020	Murali & Srinivas

7. Appendix

7.1. Checklists for Focused Group Discussions

Check list for SMGs

- Presentation on list of activities (grouped under cluster of activities) being implemented, role of men and women in each of the SA practices
- Leaders of SMGs rank the activities under the cluster (pre-production, production and post production etc
 - staff can decide based the type and number of activities implemented
 - criteria for ranking is to be developed such as women's participation in the activity, impact created, cost effectiveness, enhanced skills, enhanced income, risk mitigation etc
 - based on the criteria the SMG leaders can rank the activities
 - Any activity is to be dropped, modified or new activity is to be brought in

Check list for FPOs

- What are the five achievements made in terms of governance and systems adopted
- What are the five challenges in terms of governance and systems adopted
- What are the five challenges in terms of input marketing, value addition and output marketing?
- What are the reasons for less participation of women members in FPO activities
- What can be done to ensure sustainability?
- What are the capacity building needs?
- Give five suggestions to improve the participation of women members in FPO activities
- Give five new /innovative ideas for FPOs to take up keeping in view of new normal

Check list for women and youth on livelihoods

Groups can rank the activities under the cluster (driving, tailoring, etc)

- staff can decide based the type and number of activities implemented
- criteria for ranking is to be developed such as women's participation, impact created, enhanced skills, enhanced income, visibility etc
- based on the criteria the group can rank the activities
- Any activity is to be dropped, modified or new activity is to be brought in keeping in view of covid situation /extreme drought condition

Check list for Overall Presentation of the project

1. Project Progress April 2018 to June 2020 (as against the objective, planned activities, indicators, outputs and outcomes)
2. Budget Utilisation Report April 2018 to June 2020
3. Role and responsibilities of staff – Organogram for SADL
4. MIS and PME, Reporting
5. Capacity Building
6. Challenges and constraints
7. Previous evaluation recommendations and what are incorporated and not?

Check list for FGDs with the staff on REEIS

Checklist on Relevance

1. What are the problems identified to address by the project? Are they still valid and relevant?
2. Are there any major developments in the socio-political or socio-economic context influencing the projects' relevance?
3. To what extent are the project objectives, planned activities and planned outputs valid and relevant to achieve the intended outcome and impact?
4. How far is the target group appropriate in relation to the problem analysis and objectives?
5. Are there differences between the time when the programme/project was designed and today?
6. Are the beneficiaries identified are relevant to the project?
7. Is the project relevant to the vision, mission, goal and objectives of AF Ecology Centre?
8. Does AF have a strong strategy and roadmap in place that ensures its future relevance?

Checklist on Effectiveness

1. Are the implementation strategies and activities planned under the project appropriate and effective to reach the objectives and outcomes of the project? If not, what else is required?
2. To what extent could the selected target communities were effectively reached by the project.
3. What are the major factors contributing to the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

4. To what extent has the project achieved its objectives of the advocacy work in order to bring favourable policy environment / changes
5. Is the project monitoring effective? Are there any changes brought in the project implementation because of findings of the project monitoring?
6. Is the Results Framework a true representation of the project? Has the RF changed in the course of the project? If so, why and what are the changes?
7. What is the performance against the output and outcome indicators mentioned in the Results Framework of the project? What are the reasons of non-achievement if any?
8. How effective is the Community involved in all relevant processes and various activities?
9. Is there a 'model' in place or emerging that can suggest systematic learning and future scale-up?
10. Are management capacities adequate? Review Organogram for the Organization and the project

Checklist on Efficiency

1. Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives and do the overall results and impacts justify the costs?
2. What is the budget utilization as against each of the outcomes of the project?
3. Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
4. Have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the Program Deliverable been cost- effective? In general, do the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources?
5. Have activities been delivered in a timely manner as per the Results Framework?
6. Any major discrepancies in expenditure under key budget heads as against the approved budget and if so what are the reasons?
7. What are the processes in place to support successful and efficient implementation of the project?
8. What are the HR policies to ensure timely recruitment, staff retention, and possibility of growth?
(Investment in timely capacity building of staff, frontline functionaries, etc)
9. Is there a capable leadership in place? Is the Board playing its strategic/steering role? Any changes envisaged in governance? What are the decision making processes?
10. Does the organization have a Strategy and future road map?

Checklist on Impact

1. What is the performance as against the outcome indicators mentioned in the Results Framework?
2. What are possible reasons of achievement/ non-achievement of outcomes?
3. Has the project achieved any unintended outcome? What are these outcomes?
4. What is the impact created by the project on the direct beneficiaries, indirect beneficiaries and the stakeholders?

5. What is the impact created by the project on women and the marginalized sections of the communities?
6. Impact of demonstration of Drought Mitigation Technologies & Practices in the rain-fed areas
7. Impact of demonstration of the Climate Resilient Cropping Systems including tree crops and crop management technologies and practices
8. Impact of other supplementary livelihoods such as dairying, livestock and job oriented skills, garment making, small business for women etc.
9. Impact of involving other stakeholders, such as Government, CSO, Research Bodies, experts Farmers Organisations etc., networking, mobilizing public opinion and policy advocacy
10. What is the impact of the project at the state and national level and the contribution made in strengthening the rain-fed agriculture and in the policy formulations in favour of rain-fed farmers?

Checklist on Sustainability

1. Are activities ensuring sustainability of the project? If so, what are those activities?
2. If yes, how effectively have these activities been implemented?
3. What measures has the organisation taken to ensure continuity of the project once the funding ends?
4. To what extent are the effects, outcome and impacts, achievements or changes brought by the programme/project likely to continue?
5. What measures have been implemented in order to support (future) sustainability of the project?
6. Sustainability of the community institutions at the Village, Mandal & Project Level
7. What were the major factors contributing to the sustainability?

Checklist on Participation, Gender and Inclusion

1. How are target groups and their institutions involved in programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes?
2. How effective is the participation of the communities in project activities?
3. List the indicators for the participation of the communities
4. What is the percentage of women in the community institutions (membership and leadership)
5. What are the women-specific activities in the project?
6. How are the single women and women headed families given priorities in the project? Examples.
7. What are the practical and strategic gender needs addressed through the project?
8. What is the percentage of SC, ST, BC and OC in the population reached out by the project
9. What specific measures in place to ensure social inclusion?
10. How are the women recognized as farmers and their assertion of rights and entitlements

Checklist for discussions on Plan for Next Phase

- Presentation on the suggestions /new ideas that came up during day 1 and day 2

- Presentation on the ideas /strategies for the next phase of the project
- Articulating development goal and objectives, output indicators and outcome indicators
- Listing activities under each objective (what activities to be continued/not continued/modified/new)
- What are the strategies keeping in view of covid situation
- What are the sustainable factors?
- Indicators for gender and inclusion – specific focus
- MIS and PME required
- Human resources – organogram – can there be change from the current structure?
- Budget required (tentative)

7.2. Methodology for Focused Group Discussions

FGDs with SMGs (31.07.2020)				
Grade	Mandals	Women members	Men Members	Total Members Interacted
A	Kudair	30	0	30
A	Rapthadu	28	0	28
A	Rapthadu	19	01	20
A	Atmakur	14	0	14
A	Kalyanadurgam	20	01	21
A	Kundurpi	22	01	23
B	Kalyanadurgam	21	0	21
B	Beluguppa	11	9	20
B	Dharmavaram	13	4	17
B	Dharmavaram	14	11	25
B	Kundurpi	23	01	24
Total	7 Mandals	215	28	243

FGDs with FPOs (31.07.2020)				
#	FPO Name	Women members	Men members	Total Members Interacted
1	Kalyandurg	6	0	6
2	Kundurpi	6	0	6
3	Settur	3	3	6
4	Beluguppa	4	1	5
5	Kuderu	5	3	8
6	Atmakur	5	4	9
7	Dharmavaram	3	3	6
8	Dharmavaram Bhumata	8	0	8
9	Raptadu	2	3	5
Total		42	17	59

FGD with Women and Youth on Diversified Livelihoods on 31.7.2020				
Trade/ Skill	Mandals	Women members	Men Members	Any remarks
Garment Making	Beluguppa & Setturu	20	0	15 SMG members and 5 Non SMG members
Small Business	Kundurpi, Beluguppa & Setturu	40	0	
Drivers	Beluguppa & Setturu	0	7	Two SMG members and 5 Non-SMG members
Two Wheeler Mechanism	Beluguppa & Kundurpi	0	5	4 SMG Members and one Non SMG member
Cell phone Mechanism	Beluguppa	0	2	One SMG Member and one Non SMG member
Total	3 Mandals	60	14	74 members

7.3. List of staff visited Field for facilitating FGDs

FGD with	Staff Name	Designation	Physical Presence	Virtual presence
SMGs	D.Obulapathi	PME Associate	Yes	No
SMGs	P.Amarnath Reddy	In-charge STO & MIS, Technical	Yes	No
SMGs	B.Obulapathi	MTL	Yes	No
SMGs	Bheemeswaraia & Srinivasulu	STOs	Yes	No
SMGs	Bhaskarbabu Vijaykumar	Training Coordinator MTL	Yes	No
SMGs	Thippeswamy	MTL	Yes	No
SMGs	Venkata Deepankar Reddy	PME Associate	Yes	No
SMGs	B.Shalini	MIS Associate	Yes	No
SMGs	B. Eswar Rao, J.Lakshmana	PME Associate MTL	Yes Yes	No
SMGs	B. Eswar Rao J.lakshmana	PME Associate MTL	Yes Yes	No
SMGs	Nagaraju	PME Associate	Yes	No
Women & Youth	H.Rizwana	Alternative Livelihood Coordinator	Yes	No

7.4. List of participants in a three-day Reflection Process 01 to 3 August 2020

#	Name	Designation	Place of Working
1	Ms.Kalamani	Resource person	Hyderabad
2	Dr.Y.V.Malla Reddy	Director	Ananthapur
3	Dr.T.Yellamanda Reddy	Technical Director	Ananthapur
4	A. Srinivasulu	Finance Manager	Ananthapur
5	K.Brahmeswar Rao	Institutions Anchor Incl Business Development	Ananthapur
6	H.Rizwana	Coordinator-LH	Ananthapur
7	S.MG.Mohiuddin	Principal-DS	Ananthapur
8	G.Bhaskar Babu	Training Facilitator	Ananthapur
9	J.Narendra Kumar	Project Coordinator - CRZBNF	Ananthapur
10	M.Shaikshavali	Project Coordinator - Sustain plus	Ananthapur
11	B.Shalini	MIS Associate	Ananthapur
12	B. Eswar Rao	PME Associate	Dharmavaram & Raptadu
13	M.Nagaraju	PME Associate	Kundurpi & Settur
14	D.Obulapathi	PME Associate	Kuderu & Atmakur
15	R.V.Deepankar Reddy	PME Associate	Kalyandurg & Beluguppa
16	C.Bharath	Manager - FPO	Kalyandurg, Beluguppa, Kundurpi & Settur
17	P.Mahaboob Basha	Manager - FPO	Dharmavaram, Raptadu, Kuderu & Atmakur
18	J.Ramesh	MTL - Trainee	Kuderu & Atmakur
19	B.Vijayakumar	MTL - Trainee	Kalyandurg
20	K.Aruna Kumari	MTL	Atmakur
21	J.Lakshmana	MTL	Dharmavaram
22	K.Dastagiri	MTL	Settur
23	B.Obulapahti	MTL	Raptadu
24	T.Ramakrishnappa	MTL	Beluguppa
25	M.Thippeswamy	MTL	Kundurpi
Attended by Virtual Conference Call			
26	J.Murali Krishna	Chief Operating Officer	Ananthapur
27	A.Rudraiah	Coordinator SA	Ananthapur
28	N.Sujatha	PME Team Leader	Ananthapur
29	B. Rajasekhar	Coordinator- CB&ID	Ananthapur