

Agricultural Development & Training Society (ADATS), Bagepalli

Project No: 20120329 G

Activity Report for April to Sept 2015

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the Organisation	Agricultural Development & Training Society (ADATS)
Address	ADATS Campus, Bagepalli 561 207, Chickballapur District, Karnataka, India
Contact Person	Ram Esteves Project Director
Email	ram@adats.com
Project Title	Coolie Sangha Building in Chickballapur District
Project No:	20120329 G
Project Period	From 1 st January 2013 to 31 st December 2015
Reporting Period	From 1 st October to 31 st December 2015
Date of Report	30 March 2016
Author	Ram Esteves

2. CHANGES WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

2.1. *Related to management structure*

None

2.2. *Related to your planning system*

None

2.3. *Related to the composition of your staff*

None

2.4. *Related to other issues*

None

3. CHANGES OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGIC PROJECT CONTEXT

3.1. *Important changes in the Project's immediate environment since its inception*
None

3.3. *Implications for the work, Project objective and achievement*
None

4. OUTCOME AND IMPACT

Project Objective:

Coolie Sangha continues to provide Identity & Protect Freedom of 11.525 small and poor peasant families in the face of New Age Problems in 471 villages of Chickballapur district by December 2015.

Indicator I

Strong Socio political Presence in 85% of villages with Coolie Sangha, ensuring good governance in 57 Gram Panchayats and all cases of corruption & leakage in pro-poor schemes challenged.

At the end of this 3 year Project, in spite of ups and downs, we can confidently claim that the Coolie Sangha is on the road to recovering lost ground. While the exact socio-political Presence can be gauged only after a rigorous Effects Monitoring exercise in April/May 2016, there is visible improvement. Pro-poor measures like the Public Distribution System, payment of various Pensions, payment of MGNREGA, etc. are done with zero corruption in villages with active CSUs.

We still cannot claim "good governance" because the Coolie Sangha has failed to actually win seats in the Gram Panchayats and capture these grassroots local bodies. This is a lost opportunity that will not be available till the next elections after 4 years. But the village CSUs and Cluster/GP Meets have learnt to cope with this limitation.

Activities

Weekly, fortnightly and monthly meetings of the Coolie Sangha, at all levels, were conducted very diligently in this 3 month reporting period. This is because family Income had to be declared and Membership renewed, and a brand new mega business venture was scheduled to start at a Gram Panchayat to provide the prime elements to develop the Economy – electricity, drinking water and refrigeration. Besides, 456 End Users were given CCF loans in 39 village CSUs to participate in the Woodstove CDM, 32 houses were electrified with solar panels in 1 village, and SA practices followed up.

MGNREGA works were not implemented since CSU Members were busy with their field crops after a much delayed monsoon. Routine jobs like the follow up on payments of Pensions to senior citizens, physically challenged, etc. also took place.

Towards the end of the calendar year, the BCS decided to pay each Village Health Worker an extra Rs 1,000 each and Cluster Secretaries Rs 1,500. This was done in the last Taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings held in the 5 Taluks in December 2015.

In these 3 Months, a total of Rs 3,15,950 was paid out to 138 members as Medical Aid, Legal Aid and Aid Distress

Indicator 2

25,000 Coolie women in 11,525 Member families enjoy respect and stature in village society, with decision making powers in the Coolie Sangha and matching status within their families

In spite of a huge mistake committed by Coolie women in the beginning of this 3 year project, they have rectified the situation to a significant extent. A multitude of Indicators like on domestic violence, age at marriage, sharing of domestic work, taking up non traditional jobs and petty businesses, timely attention to reproductive ailments, undergoing irreversible family planning operations after 1-2 children, *et al*, show that the actual strength of individual women within their families has not eroded.

Within the Coolie Sangha, women have always maintained an upper hand. This has not eroded. Once again indicated by regularity of meetings and participation in programme choices, control over substantial Coolie Sangha finances, etc.

Activities

In spite of Mahila Meetings always being more regular and serious than weekly CSU Meetings, Mahila Trainers found that 35 Mahila Meetings still need more capacitation to function on their own. Especially since, from January 2016, ADATS Field Staff would decrease their involvement in the day to day functioning of various Coolie Sangha forums.

Mahila Trainers get the impression that there is an increase in the number of men supporting their wives in household activities. Mahila Trainers interviewed some men and found that they took pride in sharing the burden of household work. They said it has positively influenced their marital lives. But this has to be properly verified with data when we conduct the Effects Monitoring exercise in April/May 2016.

Mahila Trainers supported 42 women who were suffering from different reproductive ailments by taking them to specialised hospitals.

28 Marriages were performed during this period; 16 of them simple, performed in front of their home and in village temples. The remaining 12 were grand affairs at Function Halls. No inter caste or choice marriage was reported.

Indicator 3

Precarious farming systems stabilized through adoption of Sustainable Agriculture in a low carbon growth trajectory in 471 villages.

It is far too soon to claim a stabilisation of farming systems. But the number of farmers undertaking SA, area covered, and extent to which SA Package of Practices (PoP's) are followed is definitely proving 2 things:

1. That it is financially viable to reject mainstream practices in terms of return on investment, as well as per acre profit
2. That life becomes more wholesome and healthy with non chemical interventions

What we can claim at the end of this 3 year project is that the demonstration value of SA is paying off. Once we reach a tipping point, large chunks of Coolie lands are going to come under chemical free cultivation.

The sequestration of nearly 33,000 26,250 tCO_{2-e} by around 509 CSU Members through the agro forestry on 692 acres as given an even greater fillip to SA.

Activities

SA details of the 2015 cropping season were given in the previous activity report. In these 3 months, Case Worker and Village Volunteers visited all the discrete plots to support farmers. CWs assisted Village Volunteers with the Plot Diaries that record every single activity taken up on the discrete plot. Most SA practitioners have adopted recommended SA Package of Practices.

A few practices like line discipline in intercropping, Few practices like line discipline in intercropping, using organic liquids, and planting recommended trap crops were not followed. On the other hand they have reduced chemical fertilizers and increased the use of farm yard manure/biogas slurry.

But once again this can be properly ascertained only after the cropping season is over and the Plot Diaries are entered into the digitized monitoring solution.

In these 3 months, Case Workers also collected data required for converting our registered A/R CDM Project from UNFCCC to Gold Standard. Sample family surveys were conducted, soil samples were tested, and stakeholder meetings were conducted as per Gold Standard requirement.

SA Case Workers, along with Village Volunteers, attended 5 technical trainings at the government run Krishi Vignyan Kendra in order to enhance their knowledge on:

- Dry land agriculture technologies
- Climate Change, mitigation and adaptation techniques in agriculture
- Improved field crop production
- Integrated management of pest and diseases in fruit crops
- Integrated management of pest in major field crops

4.1. Changes beyond ones described above

None

4.2. Direct negative outcome

None

4.3. Incidents/events observed which could contribute to or interfere with accomplishment of development goal

None

4.4. Methods applied to asses Project's outcome and impact

In March 2016, Field Workers and Mahila Trainers prepared the Activity Report for the 3 month period October to December 2015. We did not go to the village CSUs to obtain information.

5. CONCLUSION FOR THE FUTURE WORK

5.1. Need to change planned activities

In the meanwhile, BfdW has approved the next 3 year Project for the period January 2016 to December 2018, which will be the very last phase to implement the currently ongoing 10 year Strategic Plan.

5.2. Consultancy services required

None

5.3. Important lessons learnt

Please see the above referred Project Application.