

Girijana Vikas travel towards ecological balance

Background:

Girijana Vikas Swatchanda Seva Samstha is a voluntary organization initiated during 2001 with an aspiration to develop the Tribal communities in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh through stopping of "Podu cultivation" (shifting cultivation), regeneration of various species which were gradually vanishing and moreover, global warming, soil erosion at cultivation due to utilization of chemical fertilizers etc. etc.

We firmly believe that, the humane depends on 'Nature' and farmer depends on 'land' based on this principle we are going ahead and asking asked the villagers at Ramagedda to remove the silt in their Check-dam and did so. As such we asked these tribal communities to built their cattle shed in an order and sprinkle such cattle dung into their fields to protect lands, this too they did as we said as of now we can find this in this village.

Focus on Nature:

During 2004-07 we thrown the light on Joint Forest Management (JFM) after that on, Community Forest Management (CFM) created awareness among these tribal communities on protection of forests, collection of NTFP, Value addition, village development and re-generation of various plants and owning the responsibility as the forest is theirs as well plant thousands of new once to develop the forest. Under the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) program we arranged transport vehicles to villagers for their livelihood as well as taken up land development programs & repairs to Kottapalli check-dam. These programs have been given more impact among these communities.

Later on, CEFNARM program has been introduced by the department of forests; it is a very good and supportive program to keep the ecological balance through trainings to tribal communities for their livelihood / development relating to existing forests protection & their development as well. Through these programs these tribal communities had been understood the value of forests and the relation with the nature.

Sustainable development through keep the ecological balance:

To protect the nature and create sustainable livelihood to these tribal communities we took up Maathota (development of orchards with Mango & Litchi plants) program during 2011 at 500 acres G.K.Veedhi Mandal with financial support from NABARD costing rupees 2.17 crores for about 7 years. The wasted land has been kept into utilization under this program and in tern it created livelihood to these communities. Now they were able to earn good amounts as well assurance to their lives. Provided assistance to go for Intercrop, it was helped them a lot to earn some amount for their livelihood in the meantime to get the harvest. Under this program, 500 Smokeless Choolauhs, Solar

lights and stoves have been supplied to those families at free of cost. Also given training on collection of Honey, bottling and Marketing. Not only this but also given training on collection of Adda leaf, stitching of Adda leaf plates and designing on machine etc.

While doing the above, an agency by name 'Keystone Foundation' has come from Chennai to support us for protection of existing forests and develop through raising Nurseries for rejuvenation of forests. Tribal communities understood the under current and came forward to support the program, raised Nurseries in their villages in view of protection and on time supply of water to those saplings. After grown up the saplings planted those plants in the nearby forests on their own without any hesitation. It has given wonderful impact among the forest authorities too.

Natural farming:

During 2018 with the help of RySS, Dept of Agriculture Gov't of Andhra Pradesh we get into ZBNF, created awareness on the importance of "Natural farming" by avoiding application of chemical fertilizers and Pesticides in their fields. We were able to turn 2000 tribal farmers to take up Natural farming. We trust that, it is a good sign as of now. Bringing change among tribal communities is not so simple and easy. So that, we can bold say that we succeeded in it.

Formed 50 Farmers Clubs (FC's) between 2011-14 with the help of NABARD and motivated 2200 Tribal communities in the area to go for natural farming and trained them at Best Agricultural practices for more qualitative productivity and Quality produce.

Recently Azim Premji Foundation has come forward and supported us with Rs.90 Lakhs for implementation of natural farming by our tribal farmers. For this we trained 2800 farmers at 4 Panchayaths in G.K.Veedhi Mandal in Visakhapatnam District of A.P. Appointed AG B.Sc., qualified staff along with 10 other staffs to throw the light continuously on this program, to some extent we succeeded in it. Of course, here & there a little bit problems are and those will be sorted out soon.

Focus on Ancient crops for health & Hygiene as well soil protection:

With the help of Department of Science and , Gov't of India by spending a sum of Rs.50 Lakhs motivated Tribal communities at 28 villages to the tune of 600 farmers to produce Millets and eat for their Health & Hygiene as well as to cultivate the ancient habit of natural farming. We provided them Qualitative seed for cultivation and plastic Drums to prepare Jeevammrutham, Beejammrutham and Ghanammrutham. Since this is the simple method communities learned easily and applied in their fields. All the 600 families produced 6 kinds of Millets and rejuvenated their earlier habit of taking Millets in their homes. Along with the above we arranged Machines for its processing, Flouring etc. Also made an arrangement for value addition for betterment their lives and continued support for their livelihood.

Initiation of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO's):

After developed orchards with Mango & Litchi prior to come to crop to hands, we thought of Marketing. From this thought, the idea of Farmers Producers Organizations (FPO's) came to limelight, we promoted 7 FPO's out of this 5 are Tribal headed FPO's. Out of these 7, we arranged Organic certification to 2 FPO's based at G.K.Veedhi & Chintapalli Mandals in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh. We arranged good rapport with Scientists, Tycoons' and Big companies like TATA Coffee, PDS-Kerala etc. We became expertise in it. Thus, the Gov't of AP wing Girijan cooperative Corporation came forward and undergone an MoU to arrange Organic certificates to Coffee at G.K.Veedhi & Chintapalli Mandals in the district. We are the 1st one in the state of Andhra Pradesh to arrange organic certificates to Internal Control Systems (ICS) . This work is going on in full swing. Earlier, the Dept of GCC & Coffee Board, used to supply chemical fertilizers and ask the communities to apply in the Coffee fields for more productivity. As of now they understood, took us as an inspiration so that, they have come forward to endorse the above job. In a short span these tribal farmers are going to get huge amounts for their Coffee as well as Turmeric. In view of the above lines people in the area throwing light on Natural farming & Organic carking, it is a good sign now and for the future.

*Yours Sincerely,
For Girijana Vikas
N.V.SATYANARAYANA
Secretary*