



Annual Report

2020-21

CONTENTS

About the Organization.....	3
Our Vision	3
Our Mission.....	3
Our philosophy	3
Core Values.....	5
Our Approach	5
OUR AREAS OF WORK.....	5
Our Role as Mentors.....	5
Pictorial Representation of GVK Society's Geographical Presence in India	6
Geographical focus	6
Projects	7
Regenerate the Environment Society and Economy through Textiles (RESET).....	8
Problem	8
Solution	9
RESETS Outreach and Progress in the Year 2020-21.....	9
Impact Stories	10
Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF)	12
Problem	12
Solution	12
Facilitation.....	13
Innovation	13
OUTREACH AND PROGRESS IN THE YEAR 2020-21	13
Impact Stories.....	13
Waste To Worth (Biomass).....	15
Problem	15
Solution	15
Biomass Outreach and Progress in the Year 2020-21.....	16
Impact Stories.....	17
Hesperidin.....	18
Problem	18
Solution	18
Hesperidin Outreach and Progress in the Year 2020-21.....	19
Impact Stories.....	20

COVID RELIEF	21
ARAKU SPICES.....	22
GVK’s Registration Details.....	23
News Articles	24

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

GVK designs and implements community driven initiatives that optimize value for peasant farmers and downtrodden rural households by nurturing producer organisations, value addition, infrastructure, up marketing, and perpetual innovation. Its model promotes collectivism, collaboration, and co-creation to build futuristic value chain communities.

GVK Society areas of focus include sustainable, regenerative farming, climate change, biodiversity, WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Health), education, empowerment of women and children, value chain relations and improving livelihood of farmers. GVK Society endeavours to realize sustainable economic growth by addressing social and environmental externalities with market-based solutions. It strives for the upliftment of small and marginal farming communities, tribals and women in India while regenerating their environment.

GVK Society collectivises farmers to conduct processing, improve market access and strengthen the negotiation power of the members and ultimately match demand and supply for better value realization for the communities.

GVK Society's strong international network gives an excellent opportunity to establish partnerships with think-tanks, research institutions and academia.

At the financial year 2020-2021, GVK Society worked in 557 villages in Andhra Pradesh in South India engaging with 5135 small and marginal farmer families. By 2025, GVK Society aims to reach out to a minimum of 25,000 direct beneficiaries (we do not prefer to call as beneficiaries but as partners) and 1,00,000 members indirectly, reaching out to an estimated 75,000 acres, that is about 30,351 hectares in total.

OUR VISION

We envision a transformed world where self-reliant communities live in harmony with each other and nature.

OUR MISSION

We stimulate innovation and promote processes which are sustainable, socially inclusive and gender-sensitive to support critical underprivileged rural masses. We strive for the upliftment of small and marginal farming communities, tribals and women in India by designing innovative market-driven models while regenerating their environment.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe that institutional interventions can remove barriers and facilitate individuals, communities, and ecosystems to attain their full potential.

Our projects align with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**-Gender Equality, Climate Action, Life on Land and Partnership for the Goals.



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG 1: No Poverty

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being

SDG 4: Quality Education

SDG 5: Gender Equality

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

SDG 13: Climate Action

SDG 15: Life on Land

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

CORE VALUES

- Respect
- Integrity
- Equality
- Sustainability
- Innovation

OUR APPROACH

We believe in self-sufficiency and adopt the TBL (Triple Bottom Line) framework which includes social, environmental, and financial sustainability. Women benefit as they are inclusive in all our work.

- Farmers are our partners, not beneficiaries
- Shared values and vision for unity beyond frontiers
- Aggregation of supply and demand
- Transparency and accountability usher learning and evolving value chain systems
- Continuous improvement at every integration level

OUR AREAS OF WORK

Sustainable Agriculture
Climate Change
Livelihoods
Gender Equality

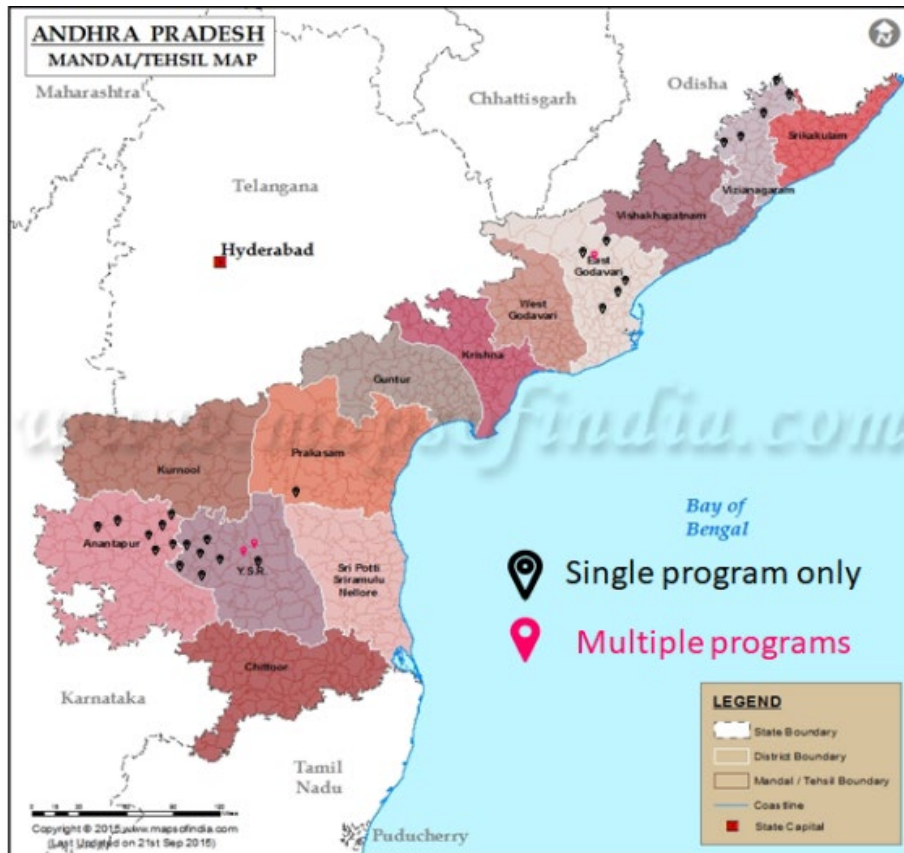
OUR ROLE AS MENTORS

We provide outstanding learning opportunities for the working staff, identify training needs, and provide a right platform to learn and exchange necessities.

We facilitate training in the following areas:

- **Social Organisation Trainings:** Planning & Review, Governance (decision making and accountability), Delegation, Conflict Resolution and Cultures of Collaboration
- **Commercial Skill Building:** Financial Administration, Supply Chain Management, Quality Control and Certification, Risk Management
- **Agroecology Knowledge System Building:** Peer to Peer Farmer Extension, Participatory Crop Research
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Forest Management, Vulnerable Species Protection, Resilience of Wilderness and Natural Habitat

PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF GVK SOCIETY'S GEOGRAPHICAL PRESENCE IN INDIA



GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

Grameena Vikas Kendram Society for Rural Development HQ is based in Visakhapatnam District and operates in multiple locations in Andhra Pradesh. Kadapa, Anantapur, East and West Godavari, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam districts in Andhra Pradesh are our existing areas of focus.

PROJECTS

The large community base that GVK Society has already created serves as a fertile ground to test bold models. As the target community members are realising the taste of GVK Society's initiatives in terms of social and environmental, GVK Society can extend the scope of impact. GVK Society has successfully designed, piloted, implemented and scaled (or in the process of scaling) the following projects and programs:

Project Name	Description	Impact
Regenerate the Environment, Economy and Society through Textiles (RESET)	Regenerative Cotton value chain eliminates the use of synthetic agrochemical inputs by favouring ecological solutions that promote natural processes. Adopts a holistic model that emphasizes farmers collectives, processing, innovation, certification, and up-marketing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Climate Change ✓ Biodiversity ✓ Improved standard of living of farmers ✓ Intercropping ✓ Carbon Sequestration
Zero Budget natural Farming (ZBNF)	Regenerative agriculture which supports farmers shift from expensive chemicals to low cost, climate-resilient natural farming. Integration of animal husbandry is a key essential of natural farming: animals are part of a holistic system for nutrients, pest & disease management, food security and diet diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Climate change ✓ Usage of available natural sources ✓ Holistic System ✓ Improved Livelihood
Waste To Worth	Creates revenue for smallholder farmers from valorising biomass otherwise burnt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Creating revenue out of biomass otherwise burnt ✓ Social impact ✓ Prevents GHG emissions
Hesperidin	Creating revenue from aborted sweet oranges which otherwise go waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improved Livelihood ✓ Involvement of women farmers

REGENERATE THE ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY AND ECONOMY THROUGH TEXTILES (RESET)

LOCATIONS: VIZIANAGARAM DISTRICT AND KADAPA DISTRICT.

MANDALS OF PACHIPENTA, RAMABHADRAPURAM, GARUGUBILLI, KURUPAM AND GL PURAM IN VIZIANAGRAM

KADAPA: KHAZIPET AND VALLUR MANDALS OF KADAPA



GVK Society builds a pioneering regenerative cotton value chain that tackles climate change and improves the living standards of small and tribal women farmers. This holistic model emphasises on creating awareness about regenerative organic cotton cultivation

RESET is a regenerative organic cotton program designed and implemented by GVK Society. A great emphasis is on soil health building, organic certification, carbon sequestration, removing toxic chemical inputs and GMOs, farmers institutional capacity building and biodiversity in more than 47 villages under this program. GVK Society is planning to scale the program to 10,000 farmers' level. This means about 700-1000 regenerative organic cotton villages.

PROBLEM

Present unsustainable production and consumption of cotton textiles lead to poverty and ecological degradation. The following figures can give an idea about the damage due to unsustainable practices in cotton farming:

- Cotton farming occupies 6% of land in India but consumes over 50% of the country's pesticides
- More than 30% total annual GHG emissions come from agriculture
- 8,663 litres of water are needed to produce 1 kg of conventional seed cotton and 20,217 litres of water are needed to produce 1 kg conventional lint cotton
- Approximately 94% of Indian cotton is grown using genetically modified seeds (GMOs)
- Cotton farmers in India are controlled by unreliable markets and lack of negotiating power. Over 300,000 of debt-ridden Indian cotton farmers committed suicide in a decade.

Small farmers, especially tribal women cotton growers need attention as they are capital poor and chronically exploited by middlemen, pesticide dealers, and trade forces. These farmers are subjected to market and crop vulnerabilities while required to make high investments with high market risk. This in combination with being excluded from mainstream service systems like market information and crop storage, and government infrastructure like transportation.

SOLUTION

RESET is a Regenerative Cotton Project working with small and marginal tribal women farmers of Vizianagaram district and small and marginal farmers of Kadapa district in Andhra Pradesh, India. All the farmers involved with the project have been trained on regenerative farming principles and supported by the organisation in the form of inputs.

The farmers under the project were certified by Lacon, Control Union and IMO Control certification bodies against NPOP standards.

RESETS OUTREACH AND PROGRESS IN THE YEAR 2020-21

- In the 2020-2021 financial year we worked with 500 farmer families covering 560 acres
- Many farmers lost their yield due to cyclone. The cotton output that came out had a very poor quality. Therefore, we facilitated the procurement of cotton via third party buyer. Almost 100 MT
- Farmer training: Farmer trainings have been conducted for the purpose of soil health management, plant protection, regenerative practises, intercropping, mulching & clean picking.
- Covid has been a major problem for a lot of farmers in the villages. We worked on Covid relief for the farmers through distribution of kitchen garden seeds
- NPOP certification for all farmers, all farmers under the program got a renewed certificate of NPOP.
- Seed distribution, cotton seeds have been distributed to all the farmers under the program at 0% interest. Two packets per acre have been distributed to the farmers.



IMPACT STORIES

Her name is Sangireddy Lakshmi from Bobbilivasala village in Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh, India. The name Lakshmi means wealth in local language in India. She is a tribal farmer, and she has three acres of land. In one acre she grows paddy crop for family consumption and the remaining two acres she grows regenerative organic cotton under the RESET program. The cotton crop is rainfed crop and depends on monsoon.

She started growing cotton under the RESET program officially from 2019. She says by associating with the program she sees a benefit for her and that this is a possibility if we work hard to improve the quality of our lives. 2020-2021 however was a very difficult year. The last year having affected with Covid-19 restrictions made life tough for her and her family. She had to move a lot within the village and to her field and that was restricted, and it was directly affecting her livelihood. With the lock-down restrictions set in place to combat the spread of the pandemic it was additionally difficult for RESET team members to reach out to her so

resulting in a lot of challenges for her and the project. On top of that there was a cyclone that severely affected the quality of the cotton. Cotton was at such a low quality that the procurement process was affected. Therefore, a third buyer was arranged to procure cotton.

However, Lakshmi's spirits are high despite the setbacks, and she says that if she has support, she can do better and achieve bigger results. Lakshmi also talked about her experience with RESET at the online Cradle to Cradle (C2C) Congress event conducted virtually.

CRADLE TO CRADLE (C2C) EVENT

A digital summit on "Textiles and Supply Chain" on 28th January 2021 was organized by Cradle-to-Cradle NGO based in Germany. The event comprised keynote speeches, panel discussions and interactive breakout sessions which showcased different perspectives from producers, manufacturers, retailers and presented best practice examples.

Our Founder, Aneel Kumar Ambavaram shared his views on the forum in front of distinguished participants from across the world. The event was hosted virtually owing to Covid-19 pandemic. RESET's tribal farmer Lakshmi Sangireddy also talked about her experience during the panel discussion.



The full session can be watched here: [C2C Summit Textiles & Supply Chain 2021 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4jnVdlkmlQfp17ybek81aE5PYpswMvLt)
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4jnVdlkmlQfp17ybek81aE5PYpswMvLt>, fifth movie.

ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING (ZBNF)

LOCATION: KADAPA DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH



This project supports farmers to shift from chemicals to low cost, climate-resilient natural farming. Integration of animal husbandry, soil building, crop diversification, natural pest and disease management, food security and diet diversity are essential components of the program. Agro-ecological principles are adopted to build healthier and resilient farm systems.

PROBLEM

Resource intensive chemical farming has resulted in losses, high debts, soil degradation, pollution of waterways, encroachment of forest land, biodiversity loss, and water scarcity in due course of time.

SOLUTION

Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) is a holistic alternative agriculture method that combines the twin goals of global food security and conservation of the environment. ZBNF principles are in sync with the principles of Agro-ecology and are aiming to achieve welfare of farmers' and consumers' while striving for a larger social good.

ZBNF is pioneered by a Padma Sree Awardee called Mr. Subhash Palekar who believes in the cultivation of crops naturally without using Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), chemical fertilizers, and synthetic pesticides. This grassroots level peasant movement emphasizes climate resilient farming methods that help farmers to reduce the cost of cultivation to zero. Hence, farmers have a better capacity to gain increased income. Locally available inputs like cow dung, cow urine, and several plants-based extracts play a key role in ZBNF methodology. We particularly work with farmers who are vulnerable to pesticides poisoning and who are in the clutches of a vicious debt cycle.

FACILITATION

Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS), a not-for-profit company owned by Government of Andhra Pradesh, and Government of India are supporting the programme under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY).

INNOVATION

- ZBNF's uniqueness lies in its peer-to-peer learning model. Farmers are the protagonists.
- ZBNF is based on the latest scientific discoveries in agriculture, and, at the same time, it is rooted in Indian tradition.
- All the inputs in ZBNF are locally available. It means zero/extremely low cost and risks for farmers.
- Natural Farming techniques are climate smart.

OUTREACH AND PROGRESS IN THE YEAR 2020-21

- APCNF is being implemented in four clusters in Kadapa district by GVK: Bhumayapalli, Bondhalakunta, Ippenta and Nallapureddypalli clusters.
- Cumulative 2428 farmers in 3708 acres.
- Cumulative 1824 farmers in 2419 acres went for Pre-Monsoon Dry Sowing.
- Cumulative 1334 farmers went for Kitchen Gardens, 426 being landless farmers.
- 497 farmers under seed-to-seed category under the program with an extent of 835 acres.

IMPACT STORIES

Venkata Sai SHG, Bondhalakunta village, Kadapa district, Andhra Pradesh:

- Group Name: Venkata Sai
- Number of people: 10
- Village name: Bondhalakunta
- Date of which SHG started: 06-04-1998
- The total number of people in ZBNF at present: 8
- Number of country cows in the group: 2
- Details of the members in the group:
 - 1st leader: Venkata Lakshamma
 - 2nd leader: Lakshmi Devi
 - Lead farmer: Ramanjaneyulu

Venkata Lakshamma, the 1st leader of Venkata Sai SHG in Bondhalakunta village, Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh narrates her journey from chemical farming to natural farming methods which was possible due to the continuous concentrated efforts of GVK team on ground.

Lakshamma has been practicing chemical farming for more than 15 years even when this method is expensive. This is because they are now used to that method of farming and don't know the alternative. However, chemical methods are not giving them any benefits and the yields are low which resulted in taking loans from money lenders and getting into debts.

She says that the CRP staff came to their village and introduced Zero Budget Natural Farming. In the beginning we found it difficult to understand and hence neglected practicing natural farming. However, the staff didn't give up and was very persistent in their efforts to help us understand something which was new for us. After their repeated visits and explanations, we slowly started understanding and practicing this method with the help of CRPs. Lakshamma also attended Sri Palekar's meeting in Guntur which helped her understand more about this method.

After practicing this method, the group members say that it has reduced their burden of initial cost of investment and increased their profits. This method is also good for the soil fertility retention and improvement. They are aware that the food grown through this method is good for their health in addition to being good for the environment. Seeing these benefits, the group members are encouraging others also to practice this method. The good thing about this method is that they can make their own bio-fertilizers without any expenditure. They can add another hundred people to this kind of farming by leading from example. The farmers recognize the need for natural farming, and they are ready to do anything to protect their soil and environment.

Three of the group members have their own cows which enables them to make inputs for farming using cow dung. This input helps their group as well as other groups for their farming inputs.

Member Name	Main Crop	Total Investment for farming	Net Income	Comparing with chemical farming, the reduction through ZBNF	Reasons for spending less amount
Venkata Lakshamma	Brinjal, Papaya, Cotton, Toor dal (sambhar dal)	22000 INR	60000 INR	8000 INR	Because of ZBNF method
Lakshmi Devi	Cotton, Toor Dal	25000 INR	100000 INR	10000 INR	Because of ZBNF method
Ramanjaneyulu	Cotton, Black gram	8500 INR	19500 INR	6000 INR	Because of ZBNF method

WASTE TO WORTH (BIOMASS)

LOCATION: EAST GODAVARI, ANDHRA PRADESH

Waste to Worth is an Indo-Dutch initiative that aims to create a circular business model for paddy straw, cotton stalks and other biomass-based upcycled products in India and prevent the release of greenhouse gases emission caused by biomass burning and create additional income for rural households. By 2030, GVK Society aspires to work with 60,000 families in Andhra Pradesh and 2 lakh farmers in South India related to Biomass waste to worth: biomass valorisation. Biochar for soil physical and chemical balance and promotion of regenerative practices are integral part of this model.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh, Government of the Netherlands, and Grameena Vikas Kendram Society for Rural Development have signed an MoU with the aim to initiate and strengthen collaboration among the parties to enable the generation of income for farmers and agriculture labour in rural Andhra Pradesh and reduce environmental pollution caused by agricultural biomass burning. The name of the programme is 'Waste to Worth'.

GVK Society is the co-founder of the innovation to spearhead the initiative in South India as the lead organisation. Biomass aims to create a Circular Business Model for paddy straw and other biomass - based upcycled products in India and prevent the release of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions caused by biomass burning.



PROBLEM

Paddy cultivation guzzles water in the form of continuous irrigation thus lowering the groundwater levels drastically. Paddy is susceptible to pests and diseases and therefore a lot of pesticides and fungicides are used. These toxic products pollute the water bodies and end up in paddy straw and grain. Paddy straw burning has been a contentious topic in India for many years. But, unlike popular perception, it is not an age-old practice. The practice of paddy straw burning at this magnitude and frequency, can be traced back to its origins.

Declining cattle population, mechanisation, changing perceptions and lifestyle, alternative use options, poor infrastructure, and lack of encouragement in the last 5-10 years have created the concept of waste in paddy fields which in turn has led to burning. Burning of paddy straw releases GHG (CO₂, N₂O, CH₄) emissions, air pollutants (CO, NH₃, NO_x, SO₂, NMHC, VOCs, SVOVs), particulate matter like elemental carbon and smoke. Due to incomplete burning of the paddy crop residue, Black Carbon (BC) is also released. Black carbon is the sooty black material that has been found to reduce agricultural yields in India and even found blackening glaciers in the Himalayas, accelerating melting.

SOLUTION

Noble Environmental Benelux B.V. (Noble Environmental), The Netherlands based livelihood model tackles both poverty alleviation and prevention of emission of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) resulting from paddy straw burning. GVK Society's focus is on farmer mobilisation and awareness creation. In addition, GVK Society will provide valuable support to the farmer producer organisations in institution and capacity building.

BIOMASS OUTREACH AND PROGRESS IN THE YEAR 2020-21

For the financial year 2020-2021 GVK Society finished extensive research on the potential to create additional household income from valorising paddy straw. Farmers were interviewed in East and West Godavari district to understand the nuances of paddy straw utilisation and understand the burning problems. The GVK Society found that more than 50% of farmers is burning paddy straw on a regular basis. Among the farmers there was a high willingness to participate in a project that could offer an alternative to burning.

Following the research done, GVK Society took the initiative to write a project proposal to ask the Andhra Pradesh Government for support in setting up biomass valorisation units, where GVK Society would play an important role in farmer mobilisation, capacity building and awareness creation. This proposal was submitted in June 2020.

The proposal was discussed during multiple rounds of discussions with delegates from the Andhra Pradesh Government and on the 4th of September 2020 a MoU was signed between the Government of Andhra Pradesh, His Excellency Mr Marten van de Berg – Netherlands Ambassador to India and Aneel Kumar Ambavaram – Chief Functionary Grameena Vikas Kendram Society for Rural Development. A memorable moment that marked an important milestone in the efforts around biomass valorisation and farmer livelihood upliftment. As part of the signed MoU, the Andhra Pradesh Government will support in farmer mobilisation, trainings, the establishment of an Experience Centre to support research and innovation.

IMPACT STORIES

Garapati is a farmer for three decades from Lolla village in Rayavaram mandal of East Godavari District.

He is one of the many paddy farmers who has been following the practice of burning the paddy stubble that remains in the field after harvesting the crop.



The machine (combine harvester) is used to harvest the crop and it leaves the stubble in the field. The common practice to control the stubble in the field is by burning it in the field itself. He feels that this way the organic matter remains in the soil and acts as manure and the stubble also gets controlled.

Regarding the damage to environment due to burning field, he feels they have got used to the practice of burning the stubble. He acknowledges that it does harm but practically they can't do anything about it.

Garapati adds on that during earlier days, the farmers used to mix the remains of the crop in the field which was a good practice. However, no one does that anymore. The field is simply burnt as it is convenient. If only one person stops burning it will not address the problem. If everyone changes their ways only then we can address this issue.

Now with GVK Society collecting the stubble as part of the biomass pilot he feels it's good that it is being taken. Personally, for himself he feels it doesn't make any difference if the stubble is burnt or removed from the field and taken by someone. However, he feels that the labourer gets an additional income of nearly Rs 700 per day with the activity of clearing the paddy stubble which is a great additional income for them.

HESPERIDIN

LOCATION: ANANTAPUR AND KADAPA (ANDHRA PRADESH)

Hesperidin is GVK Society's "first of its kind" model in India to create additional income opportunity for small, sweet orange farmers and women labourers from aborted fruits that otherwise go as waste. The project now can stand on its own feet and does not need any support from GVK Society anymore. However, because of COVID awareness programs for farmers, women and labours have been conducted.

The sweet oranges / lime which are immature drop from the tree are aborted fruits that usually go waste. The bioflavonoids present in the small waste fruits are active ingredients in the pharmaceutical industry.

There is a special focus on women labour and small farmers who live below the poverty line by providing additional income by way of collecting, drying, and selling aborted sweet oranges.



Hesperidin is implemented in more than 300 villages in Andhra Pradesh and reached about 30% of additional income for women labour families smallholder farmers, in total more than 4500 families, with a special focus on women labour and smallholder farmers living below the poverty line. 10,000 families in the next 5 years is the goal.

PROBLEM

Usually, sweet orange cultivation demands high investments amid market uncertainties, added to this it has a short life span of 12 years and takes nearly 4 years to yield fruits. The farmers involved are prone to drought and their livelihoods are vulnerable. Also, the livelihood of daily labour women is affected as the availability of work is seasonal.

SOLUTION

The bioflavonoid Hesperidin used cannot be artificially synthesized in the lab and must be naturally obtained. We could see this lost opportunity in the otherwise so called "waste" discarded fruits and make it as an additional income source for small farmers especially women who constitute 40% of the total farmers benefitted through this program. The assured market throughout the years has made this a sustainable model with gradually increasing farmer base.



The following table displays the progressive increase of farmer's base through years:

Financial Year	No. Of Districts	Districts	No. of Villages	Farmers Base
2015-16	2	Kadapa & Anantapur	10	200
2016-17	3	Kadapa, Ananthapur,Prakasham	82	500
2017-18	4	Kadapa, Ananthapur,Prakasham, Nellore	200	2000
2018-19	4	Kadapa, Ananthapur, Prakasham, Nellore	280	2500
2019-20	4	Kadapa, Ananthapur, Prakasham, Nellore	500	3500
2020-21	2	Kadapa, Ananthapur	311	4617

HESPERIDIN OUTREACH AND PROGRESS IN THE YEAR 2020-21

- Operational in 311 villages in Anantapur and Kadapa (AP).
- In the FY 2020-2021, 120 tons of fruit has been collected
- Touching the lives of 4617 families
- Scored about 30 % income increase in women labour workers
- Scored about 30 % income increase in small holders of the target villages
- Due to the presence of Covid-19, GVK Society has organised Awareness programs for farmers, women farmers and labours.

- Aspiring to impact lives of about 10,000 families in the next 5 years

IMPACT STORIES

Meet Adhi Andhra Baala Ankanna, husband of A. Rangamma. Adhi is 51 years old, his household consists out of 4 members in total and resides in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh state. He enrolled recently with 6 acres and is very pleased with the additional income he has received through the Hesperidin program.



Meet Bojja Shakuntamma, 45 years, she has a son and is residing in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh state. Bojja joined the program 2 years ago and has 6 acres of land enrolled. She calculates that she is earning an additional income at the rate of 12000 INR/season.

COVID RELIEF

In the FY 20-21 GVK Society was involved with several additional and special projects on top of the before described programs and projects.

Through donations we were able to support more than 1000 families, belonging to a vulnerable group of rural families in India, with vegetable garden seeds. This gives these families permanent access to healthy vegetables which is extra important during corona.



A total of 1000 vegetable seeds packets are distributed to pre-selected families to ensure the most vulnerable families get first. The seeds are distributed by the employees of the Indian NGO Grameena Vikas Kendram, who also continued to visit the families to ensure that the vegetable gardens can be set up in a proper way. The distribution takes place in the following villages in Kadapa district: Chintakommadinne, Ippenta, Khazipeta, Bhumayyapalle, Vallur and the

tribal villages of Kudumuru, Vetaganivalasa, Mettavalasa in Vizianagaram district, South India.

Families, with an emphasis on women, are given advice on how to have a healthy, productive vegetable garden without expensive inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, but with self-made natural plant protection agents and manures. The seed packets contain 13 different seeds including amaranth, spinach, radish, fenugreek, rosell (leaf vegetable), okra, 2 types of gourds and eggplant.



Alongside the distribution of kitchen garden seeds, meals and groceries were also distributed to families affected by COVID-19. Not less than 700 families were supported during the starting months of corona.

ARAKU SPICES

In the FY 2020-2021 GVK Society came to know about the dire situation of farmers in Araku valley, northern Andhra Pradesh. GVK Society went to conduct an exploration to understand the situation at farmer level.

Majority of the farmers in Araku district are small and marginal tribal farmers with average land holding per family less than 3 acres with less than 1 acre in the plains. Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for the farmers living in the valley. The average cost of cultivation for various crops is a range between INR 15000 – 40000 per acre depending on the crop with Turmeric and coffee being expensive ones while paddy and maize are cheaper to cultivate. Farmers are generally dependant on middlemen and commodity brokers for their agriculture investments other than banks. While the formal sector supports the farmers with a loan at an interest rate between 10-25 %, the farmers are also availing a predatory non formal sector loan at an exorbitant compound interest of 36-60%. The farmers in this region are generally not availing any formal agriculture insurance. Sustainable agriculture is the default form of agricultural production in the Araku valley due to the availability of ruminants and biodiversity.

Verstegen Spices and Sauces B.V. from the Netherlands has come forward to support GVK Society with a small initial funding. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions further explorations on funding could not take place. Visits with Verstegen representatives are planned for the upcoming financial year FY21-22, if Covid-19 restrictions permit.



GVK'S REGISTRATION DETAILS

Organisation Name	Grameena Vikas Kendram Society for Rural Development
Registration Number	207/1990
Date of Inception	1st August 1990
Legal Status	Registered as a Society under Societies Act XXI of 1860 in India
Contact Details	62. Blue Marino, Chepala Uppda, Near INS Kalinga. Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. India - 537763 Phone Number: +918489051484
Foreign Contribution Act FCRA Registration Number	010120180

NEWS ARTICLES
Financieel Dagblad

10 November, 2020, 'Financieel Dagblad', Financial newspaper of Netherlands, has published an article about promising alternatives to paddy straw burning in which Aneel Ambavaram has mentioned the trials and tribulations he has experienced in convincing the farmers about how rice straw is not a waste, but a valuable Biomass that can generate income.

The Hindu

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/turning-waste-into-wealth-by-salvaging-crop-residue/article32538011.ece>

The Times of India

Date of publication: 04-09-2020

Name of article: AP signs MoUs with Dutch government, 8 others in food processing sector

Short description: Andhra Pradesh government has signed MoUs with Dutch government and 8 other organizations for helping farmers through the government in the food processing sector in terms of harvesting, processing, packaging of fruits, vegetables, fish, and aqua products. The Netherlands government would provide the state government technical assistance for food processing, technology, packaging, containers, and other areas.



Deccan Chronicle

Date of publication: 04-09-2020

Name of article: AP signs MoU with Netherlands on Food Products

Short description: The Andhra Pradesh government signed MoUs with the Netherlands government and seven major firms for food processing, technology transfer and marketing for agriculture and aquaculture products.



Andhra Prabha - 04/09/2020



Name of the newspaper: Andhra Prabha

Date of publication: 04-09-2020

Name of the newspaper: The Hindu

Date of publication: 07-09-2020

Name of the article: Turning waste into wealth by salvaging crop residue

Short description: The Government of Andhra Pradesh, Government of the Netherlands, and Grameena Vikas Kendram Society for Rural Development have signed an MoU with the aim to initiate and strengthen collaboration among the parties to enable the establishment of agricultural biomass-based industries to generate income for farmers and agriculture labour in rural Andhra Pradesh, support industrial development, and reduce environmental pollution caused by agricultural biomass burning. The name of the programme is 'Waste to Worth'. 'Waste to Worth' strives to create a circular business model for paddy straw and other biomass-based upcycled products in India and prevent release of greenhouse gases emission caused by biomass burning.

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Turning waste into wealth by salvaging crop residue

MoU signed with Netherlands
 varsity to create business model for biomass products

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Burning of paddy straw, or crop residue, has become a serious problem in the State.

"An average of 1.5 crore tonnes of paddy straw is being generated in Andhra Pradesh every year, of which a large part is set on fire by farmers. Burning of paddy straw releases greenhouse gases, air pollutants, particulate matter like elemental carbon and smoke that strongly impacts human health," said Aneel Kumar Ambavaram of Grameena Vikas Kendram Society for Rural Development, a hybrid organisation, representing Indo-Dutch sustainability forum - INDUS Forum in Andhra Pradesh.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh, Government of the Netherlands, and Grameena Vikas Kendram Society for Rural Development have signed an MoU with the aim to initiate and strengthen collaboration among the parties to enable the establishment of agricultural biomass-based industries to generate income for farmers and agriculture labour in rural Andhra Pradesh, support industrial development, and reduce environmental pollution caused by agricultural biomass burning. The name of the programme is 'Waste to Worth'.

According to Mr. Aneel, burning of crop residue leads to loss of nutrients and affects soil fertility. At the same time, India is facing fiber deficiency and has to import fibers while there is a growing global demand for bio-based products such as packaging, flooring, furniture, energy, and much more.

Biomass from agricultural systems is the future for many product applications in the paper, furniture, and

energy industry. The demand for it is expected to catch up in Europe.

'Waste to Worth' strives to create a circular business model for paddy straw and other biomass-based upcycled products in India and prevent release of greenhouse gases emission caused by biomass burning. Both governments opt for futuristic circular solutions, wherein agriculture waste is transformed into new products that create a positive social and ecological impact in Andhra Pradesh, he said.

Through the Waste to Worth programme, initiated by the INDUS Forum, pulp and manufacturing units will be established that use paddy straw and other agricultural biomass, such as coconut, banana and pulses as the raw material and upcycle these into innovative, circular, and sustainable panels, furniture, building materials, packaging and more.

The INDUS Forum is actively supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The ambition is to establish 10 processing hubs in different locations of Andhra Pradesh by 2020. The first processing hub to be established will benefit and increase income of 4,000 farming families, and benefit over two lakh families by 2030, Mr. Aneel said.

Waste to Worth, along with the support of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, is also going to set up an Experience Centre to scale up collaborative research with respected research institutes such as Central Pulp & Paper Research Institute (CPPRI) in India and Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

"The A.P. Government is providing initial grant funding. This fund will be used for farmers' mobilisation, training, establishment of an Experience Centre to support research on other biomass sources, innovation, testing and in addition, create livelihood for poorest of the poor families in rural Andhra Pradesh," Mr. Aneel said.