

Agriculture Review Meeting

Date : 23rd June 2006 (Friday)
Time : 10.30 am to 1:00 pm
Venue : 313, Collectorate, Nagapattinam.

Agenda:

1. Sharing of plans of NGOs
2. Planning for workshop on disaster preparedness in agriculture

The meeting began with the self introduction by the participants. Followed by the introduction, an elaborate discussion on conducting a national level workshop on disaster preparedness in agriculture with exclusive focus on Nagapattinam district took place. In the last six years, one year had experienced drought, three years flood and another one year, tsunami. Hence, the following were identified as frequently occurring disasters in the district that would form the bottom line for the workshop:

- Flood
- Drought
- Salinity
- Cyclone

The following were the **gist of discussion** held with the NGOs on the workshop:

- ♣ The seminar is aimed at projecting the natural calamities the district has been facing almost every year and their impact.
- ♣ The workshop would be a forum to inter relate the available traditional knowledge with the scientific knowledge
- ♣ The NGO representatives upon discussion felt that July was the opt time to plan a workshop on the topic since in the following couple of months, the monsoon would begin
- ♣ The workshop could initiate capacity building measures against the national calamities like forming a communication system to inform in advance in times of calamities
- ♣ The workshop also could concentrate on discussing alternative farming systems

All the NGOs unanimously agreed to organise the workshop on disaster preparedness in agriculture. The following **decisions** were taken:

- ✓ The date of workshop is tentatively on 17 and 18th July
- ✓ The venue for the workshop was suggested either in Hotel Thamizhagam, Main Conference Hall or Mini Conference Hall at the Colletorate
- ✓ Background information like the profile of affected villages and farmers, back water problem, villages indirectly affected through rivers, management of flood

and drought by local people, drainage issues and results of soil testing have to be gathered before the workshop

It was decided to host around 50 people for the workshop. The following were put as potential participants of the workshop:

- ♣ NGOs (from Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Villupuram and Andaman & Nicobar islands)
- ♣ Donors
- ♣ State level line departments
- ♣ National institutes/ boards
- ♣ Farmers/farmer organizations
- ♣ International funders like World Bank and Asian Development Bank

National level:

- ❖ National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
- ❖ FAO
- ❖ ICRISAT
- ❖ People like Ashok Panigrahi from Orissa, CYSD, Bhubaneswar
- ❖ Debal Deb, West Bengal or resource persons from North East
- ❖ National planning commission chairman/member
- ❖ ISRO

State level :

- ❖ Anna University
- ❖ MIDS
- ❖ NABARD
- ❖ Local farmer namely Mr. Ranganathan and writer Mr. Narayana Reddy

The NGOs were asked if they could exhibit their works on agriculture done in Nagapattinam at the venue of the workshop. However, the NGOs were asked to bring information on the same in the next meeting.

The below mentioned schedule was tentatively arrived for the two days workshop:

- Tsunami and salinity management (for half a day)
- Flood and drought (for one day)
- Other issues
- Consolidation
- An inaugural and valedictory session

However, it was decided to streamline the schedule in the coming meetings. The discussion also mentioned about preparing a background paper on the workshop, which would be circulated to all the participants. The next meeting was decided to be held on 3rd or 4th July.

Followed by the planning of the workshop, the **NGOs shared their plans ahead** for agriculture in the second season of the year. Following are the activities/updates given by the NGOs who haven't given their plans in the earlier meetings.

- **CIKS:** The plan of the NGO remained same as shared in the previous meeting, except for the updates given below:
 - Works in Thandavan Kulam – 50 acres
 - In Koozhayar - 10 acres
 - Thirumullaivasal - 10 acresBesides, the NGO was planning to give training to their own staff.

- **CREATE:** Goat & cow rearing to 52 farmers in addition to the earlier plans
- **LAFTI** through CWS:
 - Paddy cultivation for 400 acres
 - Ploughing
 - Formation of seed banks
 - Training in ToT & FFS mode
 - Food processing

- **AIDED ACTION:** Horticulture development works in another 400 acres along with AVVAI. However, the final plan would be made available by end of July

For the rest of the time of the meeting, the participants engaged themselves in discussing **capacity building** and **participation** of the community in all the plans and works the NGOs do for them. The discussion aimed at promoting farmers the owners of plans and make them independently replicate the process after the withdrawal of the NGOs. Mr. Chandra Mohan assured that NCRC, as a facilitating unit would do coordination roles wherever necessary.