



COCONUT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
(WATER MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE TECHNOLOGIES FOR COCONUT PLANTATIONS)
KINATHUKADAVU BLOCK OF COIMBATORE DISTRICT

COMPLETION REPORT

Implemented & Reported by



Coodu

**Community Organisation for Oppressed and
Depressed Upliftment**

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Conceptual framework:

With the production of food grains increasingly becoming unviable for the farmers due to vagaries of nature, ballooning of input cost, and unassured 'MSP', more and more farm lands are being put to cash crops and plantation crops, specially coconut palm trees.

Called as *Kalpavriksha*, the tree of life, tree of heaven and tree of abundance is one of the major crops in Coimbatore district, which is the largest producer of coconut in Tamil Nadu.

COODU, implementing, among others, watershed development projects in association with NABARD, Department of Agriculture, DRDAs and allied sectors since the year 1995 in Tamil Nadu, was approached by MARICO, the leading consumer products company in India with business reach in Asia and Africa, in August, 2018, under its CSR initiative to provide support to coconut farmers in terms of augmentation of production and productivity of coconut palms in Coimbatore district.



Strategy:

- ❖ Select a drought prone area and conduct a survey of farmers willing to participate and contribute to the project.
- ❖ Assess the need of farmers and implement the project on short term basis with contribution from farmers.
- ❖ Build the capacity of farmers in knowledge and skills on water management, soil and moisture conservation and intervention measures.

Role clarification:

MARICO

The role of MARICO is to identify the area of project, determine project components, select a reputed and qualified voluntary organisation, approve project report, appoint monitors to supervise the project, scrutinise the progress, release funds at appropriate time and assess the impact of the project.

COODU

Role of COODU is to identify project components and farmers, mobilise farmers to participate and contribute to the project, prepare a DPR and send it for approval of MARICO, get funds, pay for the execution of works, get contribution from farmers, manage the project financially and administratively, account for the project and submit documents to MARICO including the completion report.

Phasing of the Project:

The target fixed farm ponds at the start of the Project was exceeded by 30%, as these were formed depending on spaces available in the farms. When all works were completed by COODU within three months from commencement of the Project, more farmers evinced interest in creating farms in their farms also. Acceding to their requests, Marico sanctioned formation of eleven more farm ponds and intervention measures in the farms of one hundred and fifty eight farmers in Phase II of the project.

PHASE I	FARM PONDS	TREATMENT MEASURES
NO. OF FARMERS	39	300
PHASE II		
NO. OF FARMERS	12	158

Identification of area and farmers:

As per strategy, a low rainfall or drought prone area with plantation crop is to be chosen. This was accomplished after perusing the data provided by the TNAU Agritech portal which listed low rainfall areas where coconut crops are grown. Such areas were inspected and *Kinathukadavu* Village Panchayat was chosen after inspection.

In Phase I, a survey was conducted in the hamlets of Mullupadi, Devanampalayam, *Perumpathy*, *Kothavadi*, etc., in *Kinathukadavu* block of willing farmers in whose lands, farm ponds are to be formed. From the survey, 39 farmers were identified. COODU obtained the consent of farmers to form Farm Ponds in their plantations.

Likewise, 300 farmers, in whose lands intervention measures such as Trench cum bund and Ring bund are proposed, were identified and their consent to carry out the measures was obtained.

In Phase II, survey was conducted in the hamlets of *Kappalankarai*, *Sirukalandai*, *Andipalayam*, *Kaliappanpalayam*, *Goppanurpudur* and *Perianegamam*, wherefrom, farmers have expressed their desire for the formation of farm ponds. Twelve eligible farmers were chosen for creation of farm ponds and one hundred and fifty eight for land treatment intervention measures.

Identification of Project Components:

While tentatively, farm pond was proposed as the sole component of the project, consultation among the three proponents yielded the following components in Phase I.

- i. Water Resources Development: Formation of Farm Ponds in the coconut plantations of 39 farmers
- ii. Soil and Moisture Conservation Measures: Trench cum bund and Ring bund in the farms of 300 farmers
- iii. Training of Farmers: Note: Training components were



decided in consultation with TNAU & KVK. The three components are:- (i) Water Management, (ii) Soil Health and (iii) Pest Management.

- iv. From all the 300 farmers, documents on land ownership record, application form, identification records and certificates of consent/acknowledgement were obtained before commencement of works.



In Phase II, formation of farm ponds in the plantations of twelve farmers and intervention measures in the farms of one hundred and fifty eight farmers were decided.

Preparation of DPR:

Objectives of the project were determined as:

- Increase production and productivity of palms by augmenting water resources and intervention measures:
- Build the capacity of farmers through Farmer Field School (FFS) training in association with TNAU and KVK to be imparted in Demonstration Plots: and
- Awareness through wall paintings and continuous interactions with farmers on water use efficiency practices.

On that basis, a DPR was prepared by COODU and finalised with MARICO which in turn scrutinised and appraised it and granted approval.

Thereafter, an agreement was drawn up between the two parties. The agreement was executed on the fourth of September 2018.

Project Duration:

Initially, the duration of the project was fixed at three months. For the training of farmers, TNAU had consented to depute its scientists/professors who scheduled the training programme in accordance with their academic session and examination schedule.

With the execution of additionally allotted works and training, the period has been extended to the 31st of March 2019.

Cost of Project:

As proposed by MARICO, farmers have contributed to the project. MARICO had sanctioned Rs. 46,80,000/- from its CSR funds. Initially, the contribution from the farmers was fixed from 5% to 10% of estimate cost of each work.

COODU had exhorted the farmers to contribute more by increasing the scope of the work physically. For instance, farmers voluntarily contributed more than 10%, so that the dimensions of farm pond formed in his/her land could be expanded in his land from originally estimated capacity to larger ponds having more capacity. At the end, the contribution had increased upto 20% of estimate cost.

In the case of farm ponds, the value of work done is Rs.24,83,314/-, with Rs.21,00,249/- and Rs.3,83,065/- shared by CSR and the farmers respectively.

A bank account for COODU CSR had been opened. Payment to the contractors and others were made by cheque by COODU.

Regulations:

- ✚ The period of the project was initially fixed at three months and later extended by three more months' upto the end of March 2019.
- ✚ COODU was tasked with financial management of the project and to account for the expenditure.
- ✚ Monitors appointed by MARICO supervised the works and submitted reports.
- ✚ Marico's direction was, works should either be executed by labour or machines, but should not exceed estimate cost as mandated by MARICO, which were complied with.
- ✚ All Payments were made by cheque.
- ✚ Funds were released in instalments as per requirement and agreement.
- ✚ Innovative practices were initiated so that people seek to replicate such practices and benefit from it.
- ✚ Completion report should be submitted promptly by COODU to MARICO.

Implementation and Supervision:

For Farm Pond works, contractors were selected based on their past performances. COODU Engineer had identified the site located at the lower side of lands so that rain water runs off to the site chosen. Inlets and outlets were designed as per the site conditions to collect rain water.

Filtering out sediments:

Inlets were inlaid with stone pitch to trap silt, which will be collected and deposited on bunds to strengthen them.



Processes in execution of works:

- ✚ Works were measured by the Engineer and completion certificate furnished, duly signed by the farmers concerned.
- ✚ Works were supervised by the monitors at every stage.
- ✚ Photographs of the site before, during and after formation of ponds were taken.
- ✚ Execution of works was closely inspected and supervised by COODU staff.

Implementation and Completion:

PHASE - I

- ✚ Farm pond works commenced on the fourteenth of August, 2018 and completed on 30th of November, 2018.
- ✚ Works on soil and moisture conservation measures (Treatment) were completed on 15th of December, 2018.

PHASE - II

- ✚ Farm pond works and works on soil and moisture conservation measures commenced on the fifteenth of February, 2019 and completed on 28th of March, 2019.

Farmer Field School (FFS) Trainings:

To manage their farms with the creation of farm ponds and intervention measures, Farmer Field School (FFS) trainings were imparted to farmers by related departments, academics, experts and leading farmers from TNAU, KVK as follows:



a) Devanampalayam Village:

- i. Ms. Devi, Agriculture Officer, O/o the Assistant Director of Agriculture, Kinathukadavu, on Agricultural schemes for the farmers including subsidy and soil health.
- ii. Dr. Sadasivam, Scientist, Avinashilingam KVK, Karamadai, horticulture expert on pest and fertiliser management
- iii. Mr. Selvaraj, Leading Farmer from Udumalpet, sharing his successful experiences in the methods of profiting from agriculture and horticulture especially in coconut farm.



b) Perumpathi Village:

- i. Dr. Raviraj, Professor, Water Technology Centre, TNAU, on latest technologies in water management especially micro irrigation methods.
- ii. Dr. Sadasivam, Scientist, KVK on pest and fertiliser management in coconut farms and plantation crops.
- iii. Mr. Thiruvengadam, President, Pasumai Coconut Farmers Producer's Company, on increasing production and productivity in coconut palms and marketing.



Analysis of the project:

- ✚ The components of the project were taken as a whole package. The situation prevailing before commencement was contemplated in juxtaposition to the current status.
- ✚ The works instil awe in the minds of the farmers concerned and others alike.
- ✚ The works present the farmers concerned with more responsibility towards his/her family as well as the community.
- ✚ The works are pregnant with multiple possibilities, including as models for replication.
- ✚ The potentials generated seem multitude, weaving countless paths to unknown destinations raising hopes of liberation from societal bonds and conflicts and fears and so on.
- ✚ For sure, it would not lead to production loss.
- ✚ It is the responsibility of the farmers to protect the assets, conserve them and get benefitted sustainably.
- ✚ Every farmer concerned would likely to explore more methods to conserve land and water and to increase production of coconut.

- ✚ The practice of other farmers in replicating the measures carried out has been studied.
- ✚ Everybody in the project area is expecting rains to fill the ponds and to drench the treated lands. They are already jubilant anticipating and visualising the shoots of coconut flowers emerging after the rains and improvement in its proliferation.

Impact of the Project:

Execution of the works has increased the confidence of the farmers concerned. Farmers have already dreamt of the revenue expected to accrue as a result of augmented production.

Farmers have thought of acquiring tree climbers, de-huskers and value addition measures, such as production of desiccated coconut, coir by-products production, coconut frond weaving, etc.

Already, neighbouring farmers were enquiring about the cost of the works so as to replicate it in their farms.

The farmers of treated lands are assiduously collecting mulching materials and positioning them around the palm trees.

Farmers have plans to plant intercrops to complete the intervention measures, which would surely lead to enhanced production levels and remuneration.



Expected Outcomes:

- ✚ Productivity of palms would increase.
- ✚ Production of palms would be enhanced.
- ✚ The remunerative income of the farmers concerned would rise.
- ✚ With rise in income, the standard of living would go up.
- ✚ Children would be able to pursue studies as a result of increased income.
- ✚ Food security would be assured.
- ✚ Models of the project would be replicated.
- ✚ Benefitted farmers are expected to form into a group and lobby for better remunerative prices.
- ✚ Protein and vitamin in supplementary form of food will be available to people at low cost.



PHOTO GALLERY



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