

REPORT ON PROCESS DOCUMENTATION WORKSHOP HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER 2001

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Gopal:

Our attempt is to take up work that is helpful to the people
What has happened until now? How it has happened?
What is being discussed in the Sangam?
What is the food condition in the house?
What is the experience of the Sangam in cultivating fallow land?
Who are being admitted in to the Sangam and how?
How it is being received by the villagers?
How it is being received by people from other, neighbouring villages?
How has change taken place?

Why today's work is being taken up: three organisations are involved: CEC, IGMRI and NRI

Why it is good and why it is bad? Each step is to be examined...

Bayamma:

Land leased in

Fallow lands within the land owned by the Sangam members
In these lands jowar was sown, where jowar was not sown, greengram was sown
This is being done for the last four years...
Weekly savings is being maintained for the last four years
Fallow lands programme is being implemented for the last three years
Those who have bullocks will get their lands tilled by themselves, who do not have
Those have jowar will return/repay in jowar and others in cash.....

Good/positive

What you have done? What outsiders have done? (What will be good to do?)

Since the time of formation people/women have become aware (hushar)
I have seen similar work is being done in the neighbouring village where my elder system was staying. I have observed it and enquired about it. They were saving money on weekly basis...

Saying that Sangam is their in the village it will spoil atmosphere in the village
landlords/Patels/Reddys opposed the formation of women sangam in the village in the initial stages. They thought that Sangam will affect their work/activities. They were apprehensive that if sangam was set up these women would not come for work in their fields. Hence their opposition. They threatened that if you join/organise sangam you don't have to come to us for work.

Over the time the situation has changed. Now they are coming to us. They are saying that what we are doing is good.

In the family/house...

There is no opposition from male members of the family. There is encouragement from the male members of the family. Men and women combined together are working towards the success of the sangam...

Women from Reddy and Baliya caste families are not members of the Sangam. Women from all other castes are members of the sangam. At present there is one women's sangam in the village.

Fallow lands:

Some lands owned by the members of the sangam are lying fallow. They have come across a programme where such fallow lands are being brought under cultivation. They have organised a meeting on this. They also discussed with male members of their families. After this they placed the issue before the Sirs.

In the meeting we discussed issues related to the cultivation of fallow lands. We decided that some cost of the work will be borne by the members...In the beginning 18 acres were cultivated under this activity. Later it was extended to 50 acres. This activity is in progress for the last three years.

The government had distributed some agricultural land to the weaker sections. This land quality is poor. This is on a slope of a hillock. Because of its poor quality the land has poor water retention capacity...Even if it rained it was not of much use as water will flow away.

Leased land:

There are fallows in the lands owned by others who are not members of the sangam. We got the idea that these lands can also be cultivated once they are leased in. We discussed in the meeting that we lease them and cultivate them. First we got the idea and then placed this before sir. They have agreed to this.

Tractor:

Tractor is being hired to plough the land.

Sangam has a committee consisting of five members. One of the members of the sangam committee would be going to the field to oversee the use of tractor.

While bringing fallows into cultivation first time tractor should be used. It is not possible to break the land with bullock drawn plough. Once tilling using tractor is completed, from the next time onwards bullock drawn plough can be used. We have learnt to measure the quantity of diesel in the fuel tank before and after the ploughing. They make a record of this. While hiring the tractor they have seen to it that they would get it on favourable terms. Whether it is on cash down basis or on installment basis they pay the same rate which is not the case in the case of others. Tractor owners have got confidence in the working of the sangam...

Until now they have cultivated nearly 110 acres under this scheme.

Work participation:

In the land leased in by the sangam all the members of the sangam have to work. Exemption will be given to those whose health does not permit them to work or the lactating mothers. Those who work in others fields at the same time will not be given exemption. We also employ male labourers for there are some works which involve heavy labour...

Bin:

In the beginning we have got 20 bags of jowar. All these bags were kept in my house. Three bags were eaten away by rodents. They lamented how could they carry out sangam activity if they lose 4 bags of jowar every year because of rodents. Then they thought about the alternatives. They discussed in the sangam. They enquired about the alternatives. It took nearly 6 months from the time discussion started to come to a decision in the sangam on the storage bin. Then this was discussed with Sirs. They have agreed to our suggestion/proposal. It took another one month to start work on the bin. Then it had to be further delayed as the location selected was on a lower slope and there is a danger of water reaching to it level. So ground level had to be raised...Members of the sangam also contributed to the construction of the sangam through labour. They have worked in digging the foundation for the bin, and in the construction also they contributed free labour under the masons.

We have visited Nyalkal where a bin is there already. It is a cement concrete bin. But it is constructed at a lower level/elevation.

Metal bin is also discussed. We thought that over the period it will leak because of holes developing

Since the use of the bin there is no problem from rodents. Presence of pests that attack rice is there, but not the pests that infest jowar...

Size of the bin:

Size of the bin was decided after visiting the bin at Nyalkal

This issue was also discussed in the Sangam meeting.

The price of jowar at the time harvest is always lower than when they want to buy during lean season. This is one of the factors that led them to go in for a bin of this type.

Besides this they are also facing problems from rodents, pests and termites

Who and when the grain to be taken out

It will be taken out after 6 months

Other things will be decide at the sangam meeting

Thirty to forty members will attend the meeting

Until now there are no clashes/ruptures in the sangam

If any one disputes the decisions of the Sangam, they will be asked to explain why they did not attend the meeting where these decisions were taken?

Buffaloes

First buffaloes were given to five members. Each one was given Rs. 5000. Those who have taken first time have repaid the money promptly. Those who have taken the assistance are not repaying properly. They are saying that they have some problems in repaying. Others who have not got this assistance are also demanding this.

How is the bin?

No place for politics in this. We don't bring them in and we don't allow them

The whole responsibility is given to bayamma
All other members go to work after sunrise
She does well. If there is some mistake we will ask. But until now there is such instance.
If she gives grain to any one she will inform the sangam. She will give only after informing
Usually grain is given during lean season. As there is lack of money they will be given it as loan
Grain will be taken out when there is need. Usually after 6 months

This time because of untimely rains jowar grains were blackened

Usually after winnowing and cleaning the grain it will be dried in sun for two to three days.
While storing them in the bin neem leaves will be mixed as a deterrent to the pest attack.
Some chemical tablets given by sirs were also used.

We need jute bags now it take out grain from the bin and dry it in sun.

Instead of going to Zaheerabad they will take from the bin

When outsiders come they talk in english and we ask them to tell in Telugu
They suggest how to do it, how best to do it

We have raised the ground level for the bin
The height of the outlet is not much, it is as low as the one in Nyalkal
In let is heavy

After taking samples both from the bin and houses and testing them the results were reported back to the members also. We were told that there was more foreign matter in the jowar stored in the bin compared to the jowar stored in the house. In the case of grain stored in the house it will be dried and cleaned 8 to 9 times.

How many members come regularly? 30 members
If each one takes out two bags it could also be cleaned!
Here after we will do like this.....

At the house they keep their things clean, but in the case of sangam grain it is mixed with all the things

Seed storage
For one quintal
Seed of the sangam

If this sir is there that sir will not be there. If that sir is here that sir will not be here. Lack of co-ordination?

Jagannadha Rao: he is being pricked by 20 members. How can he cope with that.
Narsimhulu: He comes and tells but he will not work

Rao: Bin is constructed to store 13 tonnes. But until now its full capacity is not utilised.

The question is how to fill the losses/gaps. The issue price may have to be raised by another 50 paise...it may have to be run on market lines
Whether to store jowar or not? Over the period there is lot of change in its prices because of entry of irrigated jowar and also jowar from far away places like Cuddapah
In Kollur bin is partitioned....

THOGAPUR

How the idea has come?
What has happened?
What could be done to better it?

Sangam's activity started 6 years back. It started with thrift programme. Though it started with a few later many joined the scheme. We thought that it would help in the future. Every month Rs. 20 used to be paid by the members towards this. They used pay wherever they liked and whenever they liked. This posed problems. So we streamlined it. Certain days/dates were decided and the money is to be paid accordingly. Those who do not turn up will be fined.

By now there are 14 groups.

Apart from thrift they are also addressing other issues also. They are also concerned about children's schooling, and also about health.

We have also faced problems. While there is no work and income how to pay towards savings. We raised the issue with sirs. They have proposed the rearing of turkeys. It was profitable. On each turkey we earned Rs.200. Its eggs also had demand. But the problem is protecting them. Both humans and dogs posed problems in its maintenance. It could not be continued for long.

We were also involved in road laying work.

After that we were involved in watershed works. Each day one group would be employed...

Some of the members took up cultivation of seed cotton in their fields. It provided employment and also income/surplus.

Fallow land development:

We tried to lease in land. For it we need to have written agreement from the land owners. But the land owners are not agreeable for a written agreement. They feared that their lands may ultimately be taken away.

So we planned to cultivate our own lands which are lying fallow. For this also we were told that we need to have joint pattas.

In the bin being constructed either the grown jowar or the jowar purchased from the market can be stored

If we want to buy we have to travel a long distance. If it is with us it will also be a source of strength, confidence

We went to villages near Zaheerabad where bins are being managed by groups similar to us and exchanged their experiences. After that we discussed about it the village sangam meeting.

Use of tractor may not be advisable. They won't come on time. Though they promise to come today, they would turn up only the day after. If we have our own bullocks we can attend to the work as the work demands and our own convenience. We also would get dung as manure.

Buffaloes

If they are maintained properly buffaloes will be profitable. They also support land.

If we have good land and bullocks we don't have to depend on others.

A few days back Pocharam Sreenivasa Reddy visited our village. He also came to our houses, sat with us and discussed the problems. Other villagers, particularly upper castes, did not get this treatment from him. This made them angry about us. They think that we get more attention than any other in the village.

In the village they have also created problems to us. They are very envious of our condition being improved. They implicated us in false cases and we are made to run around police stations and courts. We faced all these without being frightened. We had some support from the village patwari (revenue official) as he was also implicated in these cases in order to settle old scores. But at the time elections in order to gain our votes they had to withdraw cases foisted on us.

Because of us the condition of the school improved. Now the teachers are coming regularly. They also recognise important functionaries of the sangam and also wish us. In the past it was unthinkable. We also saw to it that ration shop/control rice work properly and regularly. Even Angamwadi/child care centre is working because of our intervention. We also worked on laying the road.

Bin; its basement is completed.

We would like help those who do not have any support/ill people.

Under SC Corporation five of us got land. Each one was given one acre. Initially this was discussed in the gram sabha. There their names were read out and all of those we attended the meeting agreed to it.

In the past few years some people left the village/migrated in search of work. We plan to bring them back. They need to be shown work in the village. They would be given a pair of bullocks and a cart.

Bin: initially we thought of building it with stones...

During lean season we collect neem seeds and sell it in Kosigi. But as we sell in small quantity we get very low rates. If we could collect all the neem seeds collected in the village and then sell it we would get good price. We raised this with sirs. They asked us to go ahead. Accordingly last time we collected the neem seed. But storage of it posed a problem and a part of the collected seed was spoiled. This bin may help us in the future.

A lawyer is engaged for every three mandals
We independently go and meet the MDO and attend meetings in the Committee hall.
Nor rice scheme is also being implemented in the village...

We don't want small kuntas under watershed, we want repairs to the Dandam cheruvu.

CEC?IGMRI:

Dampness will not affect, and moulding will not be there.

The question is about the space? In our houses space is not there to construct one. It is to be within reach of all. All the members produce will be kept in the bin. Even to dry the grain we are asking for construction of a drying platform.

How decisions are taken:

There are regular meetings and every thing is discussed openly. Decisions are arrived with the agreement of all. Some times there will be differences. We ask her to explain how she alone got that idea. We don't let go challenge just like that. We want to deliberate...If it is acceptable to all, if it is liked by all....

Only one person cannot do it. All the members have to play their part.
Now we have become aware...(hushar)

After observing the Mirzapur bin and discussing in the sangam we have decided to go in for the bin.....

Jayaraj:

How the bin will be managed by 6 groups? 2 groups for each month?

How to fill the bin? Pulley? (gilaka)

LALITHA IYER

Reflections on Grain Storage Project

CEC, IGMRI and women from Mirzapur and Thogapur met on 11-11-2001 at Thinksoft to reflect on the way the project went. My observations:

On the tone of the meeting:

There was an ease and good will through the day. Some lighthearted banter about the interactions at the time of planning the bins indicated that the field staff had tried to carefully listen to what the women were saying. The women were also quite specific about their requirements. It appears that bins were set up only when the village was concerned about the ... not '...' or 'aggressively sold' to the village. The relationship and support has continued after the installation as well.

About the stage in the 'buy in'

A striking prerequisite seems to be a well established functioning group in the village. Both these villages seem to have groups which have experienced the power of 'self-help' with 3 or 4 major projects.

Women were able to understand/accept the bin idea only after they visited another site.....a good idea. (would an audio-visual help to gain acceptance at other places).

The real test for commitment to the idea came at the time of site selection. The groups must be allowed to go through a negotiation/resolution process at this stage if the project showed work in the long term. This process should not be 'speeded up' by solutions like land grant.

Continuation of the use of the bin depends on the trust levels within the group. In one case, the group is clearly relying on the leader for fair play. These issues could become complex at times of scarcity and for when the group agrees to collect market rates or higher rates to generate some profit.

The project team has improvised on the design to suit specific needs of each village. They have made suggestions but refrained from forcing decisions.

Inter-institutional issues:

CEC field staff are seen as prime support providers. IGMR staff are seen as 'experts' called in. DPIIP staff are 'so busy with other things that they have no time for this'.