

## **Annual Report 2017-18**

### Conservation

#### Nurseries & Plantation

Kovel has raised a total of 7 nurseries covering 4 Districts viz Kasipatnam, Bangarammapeta, D. Gonduru & Pinakota of Visakhapatnam, Thallapalem of East Godavari, Melachuru of Chittoor and Kotalacheruvu of Kurnool Districts during the year 2017. The major plants raised in these nurseries are Medicinal plants such as *Oroxylum indicum*, *aegle marmelos*, *Premna integrifolia*, etc along with important NTFPs such as Gum Karaya, Amla, Myrobalans, Tamarind, etc. about 80000 Medicinal plants have been raised in the above nurseries during the year 2017 excluding the other species.

Another important addition this year is raising of species such as Neem, Pongam, Custard apple, *Gliricidia*, etc useful for promoting natural farming. These plants are being distributed for free of cost and planted in the own fields of the tribals. Apart from this, Kovel has promoted plantation of 2500 Arjuna plants in Cashew orchards as border plantation in collaboration with Forest Department in Visakhapatnam District.

#### Training on Medicinal & Aromatic Plants

A total of 150 tribal farmers have been given training on sustainable management of Medicinal plants such as *Asparagus racemosus*, *Oroxylum indicum*, *aegle marmelos*, *Premna integrifolia*, *boerhavia diffusa*, etc as these farmers are taking up cultivation of the said medicinal plants in their own fields either as an intercrop in the Agro-forestry models or main crop.

#### MAPs plantation in Agro-forestry

A total of 137 tribal farmers have undertaken Medicinal plants cultivation so far out of which, 50 are in Agro-forestry models including horticulture and other nutritional species.

### Livelihoods

#### Natural farming

Though Kovel has initiated its efforts in promoting natural farming since few years, the activity has been expanded on a large scale during 2017. A total of 19 clusters covering about 2000 farmers are being covered to start with which would be extended to a total of 19000 farmers in the coming 3 to 5 years.

Kovel is acting as a Resource NGO for promoting Climate Resilient Zero Budget Natural Farming (CR-ZBNF) in the State of Andhra Pradesh in collaboration with Rythu Sadhikara Samstha, Department of Agriculture, Government of Andhra Pradesh and

Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI). Cluster & District support teams strengthening is one of the core objectives of the RNGO besides training and certifying Master Farmers in Natural Farming in 3 years.

#### MAPs cultivation

Promotion of Medicinal plants cultivation in their own lands is being proved to be one of the effective initiatives for the tribal farmers by fetching good incomes through buy-back arrangement with reliable companies. In one of the Resource Clusters named Koramagondi of East Godavari District, Medicinal plants viz 20000 Dakki (*Oroxylum indicum*) and Bilwa (*Aegle marmelos*) – 6000 in the Agro Forestry models called Giri Lakshmi Thotalu. Similarly, in Kasipatnam & Bangarammapeta of Visakhapatnam, a total of 6000 Sathavari (*Asparagus racemosus*) and 2000 Punarnava (*Boerhavia diffusa*). All the mentioned medicinal plants cultivation is being promoted in tribal own lands only.

#### Millets

Promotion of Millets cultivation and self-consumption of millets/millet products is taking good turns in the tribal areas. Though they were used to grow millets earlier, for reasons, it has been gradually reduced to almost stopping or limited to cultivating only Ragi or Jowar. Keeping the importance of millets in maintaining good health, millets cultivation is being revived covering about 4200 acres with 2270 farmers. Efforts are on promoting value addition units especially for Millet processing.

#### Health & Nutrition

Kovel has promoted a total of about 243 agro-forestry models like Giri Lakshmi Thotalu, food security models like Annapoorna, etc in its operational area during the year 2017 covering half an acre each. Each agro-forestry models is coupled with important fruit plants & other nutritional plants such as Mango, Chiku, Pomegranate, Orange, Mosambi, Lime, Moringa, Curry leaf, Papaya, Guava, Water Apple, etc. Pulses, Vegetables, Millets, MAPs, etc are the major intercrops in the said food security models.

#### Kitchen Gardens

A total of 500 tribal families in Kovel operational area in the State of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana have been provided with Kitchen Garden kits wherein, 11 types of vegetable seeds including leafy vegetables, lady's finger, brinjal, tomato, more than one variety of beans, etc. the tribals have raised the kitchen gardens in their backyards, agriculture field and especially in the Agro-forestry models along with other intercrops.

There was a one-day sensitization program on nutrition with special focus on women health conducted in one of the clusters of Visakhapatnam District collaborating with Professors from local university during which, health issues in general, women health issues in particular, types of home remedies available for many of those health problems, role of each important millets and vegetables in either cure or as a

preventive, possible pilot study that can be taken up with a small group in the village, etc have been discussed.

### Traditional Healers

Tribal traditional healers who are serving the local communities are being identified and supported by Kovel Foundation in terms of providing them training on medicine preparation, preserving the medicine and improved treatment methods. Instruments for medicine preparation, Out Patient Registers, etc have been provided to them. They are being supported in establishing Herbal Gardens also. One of the Healers has set up his Herbal garden with more than 40 medicinal species which are important and rare. Apart from the Healers, a total of 22 Health CRPs are being trained on the above to support the healers as well as serving the community.

### Wild foods

In the month of February 2017, Kovel has conducted a 2-day workshop on Wild foods awareness and documentation with participants from tribal areas across the 4 Districts of Andhra Pradesh State including farmers and Kovel field staff. Identification of different wild foods from different regions of the State, sensitization on the nutritional values of each wild food, their importance, process for documenting different stages of important wild foods, etc have been thoroughly discussed during the workshop. Efforts are currently on photo documentation and planning to bring up a publication on the same soon.

### Events

#### **State level ToT on ZBNF**

Andhra Pradesh State Government through Department of Agriculture / Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS) in collaboration with Resource NGOs like Kovel Foundation is conducting a 9-day Training of Trainers program in Guntur on Zero Budget Natural farming (ZBNF) that is being considered as the best solution to end the woes of the farmers and make agriculture profitable.

Kovel Foundation has taken an active role in the above by sending about 110 Volunteers out of 200 to help organizing the program better and mobilized about a total of 150 interested farmers from 6 Districts of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana besides its entire staff. The said program has been launched on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 17 and continued till 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018.