WASSAN

3 Year Report on Activities 2018 - 2021




SUPPORTING MARGINALIZED & SUSTAINING ECOLOGY










Vision of WASSAN

Entrench participatory processes through network approach that strengthen Natural Resources Management (NRM) practices to secure livelihoods of deprived communities in drought prone areas.

Whom We Work For?

We work for the farming communities and agriculture labour that remained in the shadows of development with poverty, economic distress fuelled by farming crisis, affected by droughts and climate variability and deprived of adequate public investments.

Where We Work?

Our focus is in the drylands and tribal areas, the marginalised geographies where poverty is deep rooted and ecology is distressed.

WASSAN works for the **Marginalised Communities** in the **Marginalised Geographies** in India

What's Our approach?

Our focus is in the drylands and tribal areas; the marginalised geographies where poverty is deep rooted and ecology is distressed.

Our approach is to work with grassroots community and civil society organisations in building their understanding and capacities, and support government in evolving, designing and implementing schemes and programs that are relevant and becomes accessible to small holder farmers, Dalits, Tribals, women and other deprived communities. WASSAN works with a mandate of improving efficiency and outreach of public investments to the target communities and in bringing civil society networks on board for effective last mile delivery of services.

The poorer rural communities have better access to natural resources – such as land, healthy soils, water, biomass and the related ecosystems, of their own or in commons.

Access government investments, knowledge, technology and support services to improve natural resources and production systems

The poor are organized into collectives to strengthen their negotiating power and access to resources, services and markets; the Gram Panchayats strengthened for better leadership and grassroots democracy.

This is besides its own focused work with the communities in organising them, and building capacities for their collective action to better their livelihoods.

With the above approach, WASSAN has been working since 1999 in the dryland areas and the tribal areas – broadly called **Rainfed Areas**; more intensely in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha and Jharkhand states.

A Brief on Activities in the last 3 years (2018 - 2021)

DISTRESS TIMES OF COVID & RELIEF ACTION

Most arduous and satisfying effort during the year 2020 to 2021 is the Covid Relief Work. As the lockdown unfolded in Feb – March 2020 – WASSAN team has set up a monitoring unit and extended support to migrant families struck in Hyderabad and various cities of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Odisha team worked was part of the central cell established by the Government of Odisha & helped in coordinating the Odiya migrants struck in Bengaluru and other places to reach home towns.


RESPONSE TO HUMAN DI
COVID-19 RELIEF INITIATIVES
1st REPORT - APRIL 27, 2020

The sudden lockdown announced as a response to the Covid-19 crisis has resulted in large scale human distress and hunger among multitude of migrant workers stranded in their shacks in Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Bengaluru and several tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

Habitations of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal groups (PVTGs) in the remote forest areas in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are no different! These tribal communities - Kollams, Porjas, Konda Reddys living in far flung habitations could not find employment nor earn from the non-timber forest produce (NTFP) collection. They could not sell nor buy the essentials as the shandies are closed. shandies are the lifeline for these tribal groups to sell / purchase or barter on a weekly basis.

We realised that the misery is equ the wage dependent poor and households in the drylands of Te Vikarabad where people could not buy even while rice is available from the gover Supporting the government to closely situation of migrant workers from Odish various cities across the country, browsin Call Centre data on distress, following up states on the migrant workers, conn negotiating for some relief to reach the peop daunting for our team in Odisha.
We had a prior commitment of procuring 1.0 tals of groundnut from 60+ FPOs under comm aged seed systems. Procuring, processing, pa transporting the seed to the godowns while the red zones of Anantapuramu and Chitto safeguarding the people and teams from infe quite a challenge amidst the Covid-19 crisis!

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COVID-19 RELIEF INITIATIVES OF WASSAN

Most arduous and satisfying effort during the year 2020 to 2021 is the Covid Relief Work. As the lockdown unfolded in Feb – March 2020 – WASSAN team has set up a monitoring unit and extended support to migrant families struck in Hyderabad and various cities of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Odisha team worked was part of the central cell established by the Government of Odisha & helped in coordinating the Odiya migrants struck in Bengaluru and other places to reach home towns.

A much deeper engagement was to reach out to the PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) in the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to provide dry ration, helping them to sell their agriculture produce in liaison with the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA).

WASSAN has mobilised resources from Philanthropies and Public donations, leveraged our networks with civil society organisations (CSOs) across the states to extend support to migrants on the way to their homes in multiple ways.

Subsequent to post-lockdown, a program is taken up to provide incomes to the Covid affected families who stayed back – in terms of ensuring their crops are taken up, agriculture is normal and meeting some expenditure.

NATURAL AND INTEGRATED FARMING IN TRIBAL AREAS

The high rainfall tribal areas suffer due to dry spells and droughts as much as the dryland areas. These areas we focus are predominantly 'Rainfed Areas' i.e. agriculture dependent on rains. WASSAN is mandated to primarily focus on these rainfed areas development.

WASSAN's work in the tribal areas is spread across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha and Jharkhand states – the central Indian tribal belt, the areas that are in turmoil with the extremist movements.

WASSAN has chosen to work in these interior areas partnering with the tribal communities, building their institutions and capacities; all in active collaboration with the Government programs, plugging the last mile outreach gaps.

Tribal Areas of **ANDHRA PRADESH**

Tribal areas, once pristine, are fast degrading with degradation of forests, spread of monocrop chemical agriculture, loss of biodiversity, drying up of springs and streams, and other changes. This also has a negative impact on their nutrition and health. WASSAN has taken up extension of natural farming in **25 Clusters Gram Panchayats** in tribal areas of **4 districts** of **Andhra Pradesh state** and in **3 districts** of the **Telangana state**.

These have a focus on strengthening Millets value chains, promoting fisheries and backyard poultry integrated farms with Desi birds. Natural Farming practices integrating ZBNF, SRI and Guli methods were introduced. Introducing cycle weeders, weeding with bullocks and such operations resulted in less labour consumption while yields (of Ragi) increased from about 4 quintals per acre to 8 to 9 quintals; thus, allowing generation of a household surplus. These natural farming practices increased from about 100 to 200 acres in 2018 to over 3500 acres in the current year. A plan was formulated with Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS) [A Government of Andhra Pradesh institution] to scale up the natural farming practices in Ragi crop to 10000 acres in the tribal areas.

Introduction of Millet processing by using modified 'mixies' developed by WASSAN are catching up in terms of micro-enterprise in the villages that can dehull millets for household consumption at a small service fee. This is encouraging more families to revert back to consuming millets. About 30 such enterprises have been established so far.

Water has been a critical issue in agriculture on the slopes in tribal areas; crops are often subjected to climate risks. Two village scale irrigation systems with Solar Energy were established with active contribution of the community; one in Chinarama cluster in Srikakulam and the other at Goppulavalasa in Paderu division of Visakapatnam district. These irrigation systems lifts water from streams and provides irrigation to about 40 acres, providing access to all households in the village.

A solar based cold storage unit was established with the Dhimsa FPO of tribal farmers in Paderu division in support of the vegetable growing farmers who are accessing Rythu Bazaar in Visakapatnam.

Tribal Backyard Poultry with Desi Breeds

Tribal Backyard Poultry with Desi breeds has been a major initiative that has been successfully scaled up in the tribal areas. Initiated in 2017-18 in a small way, the model has now become a main successful program of the Tribal Welfare Department and ITDAs. Desi Breed Farms are promoted as enterprises in half acre of land with about 50 desi-hen units. Managed under natural forage systems, these provide chicks to about 25 to 50 households in the village who have taken to backyard poultry. The income from the Desi Breed Farms are averaging at about Rs.60000 to Rs.75000 per year; that from the backyards is around Rs.8000 after meeting the household demand per year.

About 350 breed farms are established in the region with support from ITDAs and the Tribal Welfare Department and out reached to over 10000 tribal families in the last three years. WASSAN provided critical support in mobilisation, technical design, training and support in establishing service fee based vaccination system managed by a community group.

This successful experience in Backyard poultry led WASSAN to take up a collaborative initiative with BRLF to train their partners in 3 states on backyard poultry; an online course was designed for this purpose and executed.

Fisheries in Seasonal Water Bodies

Fisheries in seasonal water bodies has greater potential but unused. A system of fish production in a cluster of ponds was evolved to make use of all the water bodies for fish production. A total of 112 water bodies in 67 villages with a water spread area of 128 acres were brought into fish production. Fish harvests, though not of Table size, have good demand locally and consumed by villagers and sold nearby.

Tribal Areas of **TELANGANA**

WASSAN worked with the Kollam PVTG tribal groups in Adilabad district of Telangana during the Covid extending support to the interior areas. An initiative was taken up along with the District Administration to improve the lands distributed to them under Forest Rights Act. WASSAN brought in a network of four organisations into this collective effort. Continuing with these actions, an initiative was taken up to diversify crop systems to include food grains (millets and pulses) into the present cotton based monocrop systems. Over time shift to monocrop of cotton eroded nutrition of the tribal families. This effort is to restore consumption of millets and pulses at the households.

WASSAN supports the FPOs (Farmers' Producer Organisations) in Khammam District. Natural farming methods are now practiced by 30 farmers in the FPO, and one group has taken to produce cookies and supply to Ashram Hostels with the support of ITDA.

WASSAN has been partnering with Watershed Committees in the tribal areas of Asifabad district since long. A program on promoting Climate Resilient agriculture and two new watershed development programs are taken up with support from NABARD.

Tribal Areas of **MALKANGIRI DISTRICT OF ODISHA**

WASSAN has been working in the strife torn Malkangiri interior tribal areas since 2014. Last three years contributed to a greater expansion of this work with the state government deciding to initiate a special program on integrated farming systems to scale up our successful work in the district. The program has an outreach of 20000 households in 40 Gram Panchayats targeting 40,000 acres of farm lands, 20000 livestock and 2500 waterbodies for fish production.

AnchalikSevaKendras, farmers' organisations registered as Farmers Producer Companies are established to provide farm production related services to the farmers. Crop systems improvements, improving varieties, including bund plantation with arhar, crop intensification etc., were taken up. Protective irrigation sub-plans have expanded to include 256 acres and two farmers' groups were established to demonstrate larger scale protective irrigation. Fisheries were taken up in a total of 310 acres of water-spread area. Vegetable cultivation was expanded to cover 55 acres with 25 women SHGs.

300 night shelters were constructed for backyard poultry and 6 Desi-breed farms established; earning about Rs.15000 to 20000 through sale of birds. 50 goat shelters were also constructed to improve healthcare.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE THROUGH NATURAL FARMING AND GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT IN DRYLANDS

Drylands are frequently subjected to rainfall and crop failures, resulting in acute farmers' distress. This has been a core area of concern and challenge that WASSAN has been facing. Promotion of natural farming that includes aggressive crop diversification, intensive horticulture and desi-poultry integrated farms, reviving fallow lands to increase fodder base, spreading practices of natural farming to wean away from use of chemicals, establishing support systems in seeds, livestock vaccination and securing crops through protective irrigation and management of groundwater – have evolved as potent strategies to revive the drylands into a growth path.

Climate Resilient Natural Farming in Ananthapuramu and Chittoor districts of Andhra Pradesh

1 Navadhanya Crop System

Diversification of crops from the extensive monocropping of groundnut is a prerequisite for improving the drylands in the two districts of Rayalaseema. WASSAN has been working on reviving the traditional Navadhanya crop system and the last three years have shown very promising results. This system has shown an additional income of about Rs.10000/- per acre in addition to providing much needed millets, pulses for consumption at the households, fodder for livestock and lot of biomass for soil health. The Navadhanya system expanded to over 2500 acres. A more important achievement is that experienced farmers have collected the traditional seeds of multiple crops that are part of the system (specific phenotypes) and multiplied their seeds. Now the groups have seeds sufficient to expand to 15000 acres. These are taken up as a part of the farmers' cooperative – Jan Jeevana MACs Society as a business.

This initiative has expanded in 15 clusters of Gram Panchayats in Anantapur and Chittoor districts and is being taken by RySS for upscaling.

2 Un-fallowing of lands for meeting fodder scarcity

With increasing risk and uncertainty, many lands are left fallow without cultivation and the trend is increasing. A major breakthrough in the last 3 years of work is on reviving the fallow lands to meet fodder scarcity started in the Chittoor clusters & expanded to over 1926 acres by now with 1650 farmers. Farmers having animals but with severe fodder shortage are tying up with those having fallow lands within the farmers groups to do diverse fodder production (including legumes, millets etc.) using natural farming methods. 652 farmers have taken up fodder production in 869 acres of land. Some of the villages Chittoor have moved from scarcity to surplus in just a matter of one year.

MILLETS TO MILLIONS

Promotion of Millets on farms and in plates/ diets has been one of the focus areas for WASSAN since its work during the 11th Five Year Plan; an agenda framed as **"Millets to Millions"**. Multiple initiatives are taken up in this since 2018 and the agenda has grown much larger building on the initial learning from the earlier projects.

1 Comprehensive Revival of Millets Program

This program was initiated in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Government of Andhra Pradesh in tribal and dryland areas. The program is taken up in 7 districts in AP with civil society partners on ground and WASSAN providing overall design and capacity building support. Millets area in the program Blocks has revived to cover more than 5000 acres and several enterprises have come up.

2 Odisha Millets Mission (milletsodisha.com)

OMM is a path breaking initiative where the model of Block level revival program on millets – by simultaneously working on aspects of area expansion, improving productivity, increasing household consumption, setting up processing facilities and inclusion in state nutrition programs & Public Distribution System (PDS) – all that within the selected Blocks.

The program was taken up by the Government of Odisha with WASSAN playing critical support in developing the policy, design of the program and facilitating successful implementation on ground. The program has expanded to 81 Blocks in 14 districts with some of the Districts joining by converging District Mineral Fund. It has an outreach of over 100,000 millet farmers supported by 35 partner CSOs in the state.

Millets procurement is taken up by the Government for supply in PDS and Anganwadis. The procurement of Ragi reached over 2.00 lakh quintals; first time in the history – involving FPOs by announcing MSP. Ragi Mandis are established all over the Blocks where the area under Ragi has reached a scale.

Productivity of farms in Ragi nearly doubled with the introduction of SRI/ Natural farming practices.

The program partners with Mission Shakti in establishing Millet Cafes in the towns and urban areas- enterprises run by the women SHG federations. Another major success is serving Millet Laddoos in Anganwadis as a part of ICDS programs. The Millet Laddoos are prepared with nutritional composition that helps children.

The program is now taking to promotion of millets processing enterprises in a big way. Odisha Millets Mission received greater accolades from the Niti Ayog and the Ministry of Agriculture and has become a role model for promotion of millets in other states.

❸ NitiAyog Supported Pilot Initiative in 3 Districts on Inclusion of Millets in ICDS

NitiAyog came forward to take up a pilot program in Telangana state in 3 Aspirational districts (Asifabad, Mulugu and BhadradriKothagudem) to introduce millets into ICDS with FCI directed to procure millets and supply.

WASSAN facilitates the program. The program has just started and is envisaged to promote millet production in those districts, processing and supply to the ICDS in due course.

4 Millets Processing

Millets processing was been a major stumbling block in increasing their consumption. Under the Sustain+ project WASSAN team adapted and standardised the technique of using household mixies for dehulling of minor millets. This is gaining acceptance as a micro enterprise among a group of households to get their millets processed locally and in small quantities. Over 30 enterprises are now set up and modules on training the local skilled person in assembling these modified mixies and attend to any repairs have been completed. The mixies are removing a critical processing bottleneck in the tribal areas.

With these several initiatives taken to scale, WASSAN is nearing realising its target of **'Millets to Millions'** by 2023 declared as the International Year on Millets.

DROUGHT MITIGATION INITIATIVE

Drought mitigation and climate resilience can only happen with the farming systems and natural resources use and management are aligned to meet the climate variability and contingencies; it is not just a question of recharging groundwater.

Building on this perspective, WASSAN worked with the Department of Agriculture, Andhra Pradesh in evolving a program – AP Drought Mitigation Project. The project is designed to comprehensively address drought risks implemented by the FPOs. 105 FPOs were formed in 5 Rayalaseema Districts supported by 9 lead facilitating agencies involving over 35 CSOs. Over 100 Bio Resource Centres were established to provide inputs for nutrition, pest and disease management prepared from locally available material. The FPOs are into business lines scoping markets for the diverse crop systems.

WASSAN provided the design, policy, capacity building and synthesising learning support to the project. The project promotes adaptation in crop and livestock production systems with protective irrigation as a core element.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Managing Groundwater within the renewable limits is a complex issue with about 1/3rd of farmers having access to and the rest awaiting for some investments to pool to dig a new borewell. Much of the farmers' distress is also on account of failed attempts/ investments at accessing groundwater.

In addition to accessing harvesting and accessing rainwater water resources where they are available, WASSAN has evolved a focus on life saving / protective irrigation to secure crops as a first claim on groundwater, particularly for the rainfed farmers. Collectivisation of Groundwater by pooling borewells into a common grid to provide protective irrigation for all the farmers (with or without borewell access) within the grid was piloted successfully.

After successful pilot initiatives Department of Agriculture has come forward to scale up the initiative in 3 districts. With about 1500 acres area adding up, a total of 3000 acres was now covered in 28 villages with 38 farmers' groups in three districts.

In the high rainfall areas of Malkangiri district of Odisha – similar system is established in two groups with surface irrigation.

1 Optimising Water for Rainfed Agriculture

Partnering with Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and National Rainfed Areas Authority, a learning course is initiated for participants from government and NGOs working on water resources in three states – Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka on the subject. The course is for two years and involves online modules and practical experiments led by a group of scientists from Australia and India.

2 Participatory Groundwater Management (PGWM)

In partnership with a national network group led by ACWADAM, WASSAN has supported several partners of BRLF and Arghyam in the training on participatory groundwater management – in Odisha and Jharkhand states. The program covering nearly 2000 acres in 4 pilot villages, envisages building capacities of the community to measure, monitor groundwater and develop participatory aquifer mapping to arrive at decisions on water management at community level.

WASSAN has facilitated crop water budgeting exercise in the villages where Dr.Reddy Foundation has been working in Bihar and other states.

3 Farm ponds, mobile Solar Energy Carts:

Farm ponds are promoted in all the programs that WASSAN is engaged with for harvesting rainwater and providing critical irrigation. Mobile solar energy carts drawn by bullocks with 2 hp capacity solar panels were developed for mobile pumping using solar energy under the Sustain+ program. These are in a pilot phase.

WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT& MGNREGS

Watershed development is the core mandate and expertise with WASSAN. Two watershed development projects are in the implementation stage supported by NABARD in Telangana state.

WASSAN has initiated a partnership with Rural Development, Department of Jharkhand Government to support it as a Project Management Unit (PMU) in implementing a collaborative program supported by BRLF. The program envisages developing participatory watershed development plans for 695 watersheds (over 3.0 lakh ha area) under MGNREGS to make its investments effective. 12 CSOs are involved each taking up two Blocks. WASSAN will also implement this program in Anandpur and Gudri Blocks of West Singhbhum district – an interior tribal area in the Saranda forest. The program has just started and initial capacity building programs are ongoing.

IMPROVING PUBLIC SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Public Services – such as vaccination in livestock, ensuring availability of seeds, adequacy of farm machinery services, credit etc., are crucial for the rainfed agriculture. Excessive centralisation and lack of access to such services to the small holder farmers and livestock rearers have been major regressive factors in the growth of rainfed agriculture. How to decentralise these public services and building community partnership into their management are the key areas for action that WASSAN has identified.

1 Community Managed Seed System (CMSS)

This initiative stated over 6 years back in Anantapur has gained ground. Producing seed required for public subsidised seed distribution within a Block, and building a local seed value chain to replace the centralised procurement and distribution of groundnut seed by the Department of Agriculture is attempted. WASSAN coordinated with over 60 FPOs in Anantapur and Chittoor districts supported by CSO Facilitating Agencies for production of certified groundnut seed and linked them to seed distribution system. The seed procurement reached 40,000 quintals last year generating over Rs.40 crores turnover for all these FPOs together.

The system is now mainstreamed into the Department of Agriculture and AP State Seed Development Corporation.

This system is now expanded to include seed for crop diversification. The farmers cooperatives now have procured seed required for about 15000 acres of crop diversification on business mode.

2 Streamlining Livestock Vaccination Services

The last mile gap in vaccine administration – particularly for small ruminants and back yard poultry has been a major issue resulting in high morbidity and mortality of animals. In all our programs, introduction of service based vaccination i.e. vaccine administration done by a trained vaccinator supporting the Animal Husbandry department and sourcing vaccines from them has been institutionalised. Large number of birds and small ruminants are regularly vaccinated in the program villages.

AGRO-BIODIVERSITY IN USE

Adaptation to local climate and geographies is a major attribute of climate resilience. Indigenous breeds of animals, fish and land races are important not only from a conservation point of view but also, for improved adaptation to climate change. Agri-Biodiversity has evolved as a core focus area for WASSAN.

1 Registration of the First Telangana Cattle Breed

WASSAN team worked with the Telangana Biodiversity Board, ICAR-National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources and the livestock Breeders Associations in the Nallamala region to generate data required for formally registering PodaToorpu Cattle breed. This has been declared as the first indigenous cattle breed registered in the Telangana State.

Since its registration, orders were issued to stop cross breeding in the area and the demand (and price) for these cattle has increased.

2 Crop Biodiversity Blocks

WASSAN partnered with RySS, ICAR-NBPGR's regional station in Hyderabad and ANGR Agriculture University to initiate its work identifying, conserving and bringing landraces into use. This is much required for the natural farming.

Crop Biodiversity Blocks were established in 7 locations to scout for local landraces, encourage farmers to share the material and data, purify them and multiply farmer preferred ones to make them available to larger numbers of farmers. About 450 accessions were digitally mapped in a database. An Open Access Seed Digital Repository is also in the process of development.

A systematic effort was made in Odisha Millets Mission where over 100 indigenous varieties / landraces are screened and evaluated from multiple perspectives and some of them are taken for multiplication. Some of the landraces are found to be outperforming the local checks even in productivity under natural farming methods.

SUSTAIN+ - FARM EASY: MAKING FARMING EASY FOR WOMEN AND FARM WORKERS

Making farm operations easier is a great challenge in rainfed areas due to undulating terrain, low rates of return and high seasonality in crops. Any new machinery displaces women and labour resulting in high underemployment.

'Farm Easy' as a team was established in WASSAN in 2019 to work towards innovations in improving labor productivity and income i.e. making the work turnover efficient. Supported by Sustain+ program, several innovations came up using Solar energy. The following innovations emerged.

- A mobile Solar Cart with foldable solar panels with a pump of 2 HP capacity evolved as a major innovation helping in pumping water for irrigation from dispersed farm ponds and other water bodies without access to electricity. It replaces diesel engines and can be used for running machines.

- A pull-type sprayer (Combo Sprayer) that helps in carrying material and Jeevamrutam (30 lt) for spraying using batter sprayer recharged by solar.

- Household mixies were remodelled to do hulling of minor millets are getting popularised as micro enterprises.

- Several other innovations are in the pipeline.

Farm Easy – is intending to provide a platform for informal artisans and technicians and fabricators at Block level or below to manufacture these and sell.

CONSTRUCTING A NEW REALITY: FACILITATING WASH INITIATIVE WITH THE SUPPORT OF HSBC

A WASH project was executed in 11 villages of Anandapuram Mandal of Vizag District in Andhra Pradesh. As a part of this initiative, required infrastructure was strengthened in rural areas for improving quality of life, in terms of providing access to drinking water, sanitation, irrigation, energy appliances etc. Several efforts were made for water conservation and improving productivity in agriculture. Access to groundwater was improved by renovating and desilting open wells. Horticulture and solar based energy efficient water distribution systems were promoted. More than 280 families benefitted with these interventions. 70 acres of additional area was brought into cultivation in Rabi season. As a part of plantation and horticulture, cashew and mango orchards were promoted in 87 acres that provided additional income to the farmers.

Local women were trained in enterprises activities like millet based bakery, making of *dhoop battis* (with flower waste) and cloth bags etc. Some local youth took up vegetable marketing in Rythu Bazars and other urban centres. Measures were taken to provide access to safe water for the people in project villages. Renovation/ construction of drinking water storage tanks, digging/renovating bore wells, providing tap connections etc. are part of such measures. A total of 722 families benefitted with these activities.

For improving sanitation,230 household level toilets were constructed and some dysfunctional toilets were repaired. For those families who do not have enough space for toilets at household level, a toilet block was constructed in a common land donated by local Gram Panchayat. 60 toilets were constructed in this block for 60 families. All these have bathing space, dedicated water supply, electricity connection & wastewater treatment facilities.

Energy efficient stoves were distributed to 187 families in the project villages. A school kitchen was renovated. A dining room was constructed for arranging mid-day meals for school children. Two children parks were constructed in two villages. Local Gram Panchayath donated the lands for these parks.

Several government schemes were integrated into village level action plans. Training programs, meetings and exposure visits were organized to improve capacities of the local community.

NETWORK AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

WASSAN has networking as a larger approach to build communities of civil society, develop their capacities and to interface with mainstream programs and to evolve relevant programs and public investments.

1 Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture Network (RRA Network (www.rainfedindia.org)

WASSAN has played a key role in the emergence of RRA network. Networking with other organisations and individuals working on issues of rainfed areas, RRA Network facilitates interaction, collaborations between civil society networks and government, sharing of experiences and promotes dialogue on policy development. It has over 600 members from multiple institutions- CSOs, researchers, bankers, farmers / their organisations and interested individuals.

RRAN facilitated several collaborative initiatives and is recognised as a Knowledge Partner to the National Rainfed Areas Authority (NRAA), a Govt of India institution. RRA Network also partners with MANAGE, ICAR-CRIDA and several other public research institutions. RRAN works in 10 states across the country.

Several consultative workshops were organised by RRAN over the last three years, prominent among them being the workshop on United Nations Commission to Combat Desertification- in evolving an action plan for rainfed areas (in collaboration with NRAA), a National Convention on Rainfed Agriculture, several thematic workshops of 9 working groups it has constituted to facilitate policy development appropriate for rainfed areas on themes such as Seeds, Livestock, Water, Millets, Crop Systems diversification.

2 National Coalition on Natural Farming (NCNF) (www.nfcoalition.in)

The NCNF has emerged during the year 2020-21 with several civil society players and RythuSadhikaraSamstha and researchers wanting to engage with and support the process of spread/ promotion of Natural Farming across the country. With eminent people providing guidance from the Steering Committee, the NCNF team started providing capacity building inputs to various partner organisations (300 organisations & individuals are now members) and supporting promotion of natural farming in different states.

3 YEAR REPORT ON ACTIVITIES 2018 - 2021

WASSAN

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