

ANISHA

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



'ANISHA'

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the year 2016, nature was cruel to farmers in most districts of Karnataka. Farmers faced a major drought and their livelihoods were affected, due to shortage of water and fodder, we could witness death of farm animals in high numbers. After several years of drought, Martalli region received early monsoon in 2017, farmers were happy and were busy with their farming activities.

Unfortunately, farmers did not have seeds for sowing as they lost them due to the previous year's drought. Sourcing of seeds was a big task for farmers. Anisha supported farmers by sourcing and distributing seeds of finger millet and many varieties of pulses. As a result, sowing in Martalli was carried out on time.

For many years, Anisha has been working towards household food security of farmers in the region. Anisha has achieved nearly 100% in the year 2017. Almost all the farmers cultivated food crops like finger millet with inter-crops like pulses, pigeon pea, cowpea, and sesame. They also cultivated minor millets and other crops. Farmers harvested bumper yields of all crops and sufficient amount of fodder for livestock. 375 landless families were growing kitchen gardens along with organic farming. They also earned a good yield. The self-help groups of both women and farmers are thriving. Their savings and credit activities are continuing. This year, 302 varieties of native seeds were conserved and multiplied at Anisha's Resource Center.

The educational support program for school-going children of small and marginal farmers also continued. 65 students received support during the year and all of them succeeded to their next Grades. 1,047 students participated from 23 schools and cultivated a range of crops and saved Rs.11, 29,564/-

During the reporting period, Anisha has accomplished more than its marked target.

2. SUSTAINABLE ORGANIC FARMING

After many years of Anisha's work in the field of organic farming with small and marginal farmers of Martalli region, 220 farmers have fully converted to organic farming. This year, from June to November, the region received sufficient rains and we could witness the farmers working devotedly in their farms. Due to early monsoons, all farming activities such as, ploughing, transporting farm-yard manure, sourcing of seeds, sowing, fencing boundaries were all carried out on time. Farmers are very happy with their healthy crop yield and sufficient fodder for their cattle.

Farmers frequently visit Anisha Resource Centre for new varieties of seeds and bio pesticides. They also come to get more/new information on organic farming. In order to encourage sharing and exchange of information on organic farming activities, a Farmers meeting was held in one of the farms. At this meeting, apart from sharing information on organic farming, farmers also expressed that their families are more health conscious and want to eat healthy food. So, to be self-sustained, every member of the family helps in the organic farming activities like preparing compost, getting native seeds, preparation of different nutrients and bio-pesticides.

3. Kitchen Garden Program for landless families

Families who do not have any piece of farmland were involved in Kitchen Garden Program to grow vegetables for their own consumption. During farming season, which is about 3 to 4 months in a year, these families work for others as agricultural laborers and earn Rs.150 a day. Their daily wages are accumulated and are paid at the end of the crop season; they do not get paid every day. Under the circumstances, these families cannot afford to healthy and nutritious food.

Kitchen Garden Program was introduced to these landless families, mainly to address food security. After several years of Anisha's intervention among the landless families, the beneficiaries are growing every year. Consumption of vegetables among these families is increasing and seed savers are also increasing. This year, on an average, each family harvested and consumed about 150 to 200 kgs of different vegetables. There was high yield of pumpkin, bottle gourd and ridge gourd.

4. Kitchen Garden Program for Tribal Communities

Kitchen garden has been very useful for the tribal communities because the consumption of vegetables among the tribal communities is very low. Men from these families work in the mines and visit their families every 3 months. In the absence of male members, women take care of their families. They will not have money to buy vegetables and even if they want to buy, they need to walk 3-4 kilometers to get them. So, they rarely eat vegetables. For these reasons, they are very interested in the Kitchen Garden Program.

130 families in this community were benefitted from this program. They raised and harvested different varieties of vegetables namely, pumpkin, bottle gourd, bitter gourd, ridge gourd, okra, cluster beans, creeper beans, radish, butter sponge and greens. Each family consumed about 160 to 220 kgs of vegetables this year. Almost, all families involved in Kitchen Garden Program harvested more vegetables as a result of good monsoons this year.



Tribal Kitchen Garden

5. Self Help Groups

There are seven Self Help Groups - four farmers' group and three women's group. All the seven groups are active and are continuing with savings and credit activities. These groups lend money to its members as a revolving fund to buy farmyard manure, fodder for livestock, to pay for ploughing charges and laborers' wages.

Every group meets monthly to collect money and to present their accounts of savings and credit. During these meetings, they also discuss about health and farming issues. Staff from Anisha will be present to conduct these meetings and to write the accounts. With the support of Anisha, 42 members from these seven groups received government benefits like tarpaulin to protect fodder and seeds.

6. Seed conservation and multiplication

In the year 2006, Anisha started a Seed Bank to collect and conserve native seeds in the region. At that time, it could collect very few varieties of native seeds from the region. As the work progressed, we started collecting seeds from nearby villages, from neighbouring districts and other states. Now, our Seed Bank has more than 302 varieties of native seeds like paddy, finger millet, minor millet, oil seeds, pulses, vegetables and many more.

Every year, these seeds are distributed to the farmers for cultivation and after harvest they return new seeds to the Seed Bank for conservation. This way the old seeds are replaced with fresh seeds and germination is maintained.

In 2017, we travelled to South Tamil Nadu, a neighbouring state, for sourcing rare varieties of native seeds and could collect different varieties of chillies, pulses, and eggplants.

This year at Anisha, we prepared small plots of land, each measuring 1x1 meter, to grow and multiply different variety of seeds. 250 plots were prepared and 250 varieties of seeds were raised. These plots were closely monitored, plant growth nutrients were supplied and bio pesticides sprayed to control pest. A recording format was used for each variety of seed to assess the growth, pest and disease attack, yield, etc.



Varieties of vegetables multiplied in Anisha Resource Center

Seed Fair

ANISHA took part in five different Seed Fairs organized by Department of Agriculture. Anisha put up its Seed Stalls in all these Fairs. Many farmers from different places visited the Anisha's Stall and were very keen to see and purchased the different native seeds and also they visited Anisha Seed Bank for more varieties.



Seed Fair at Hanur Hobli

7. Fodder support for cattle

In 2016, due to severe drought, the livestock in the State were harshly affected without water and fodder. In order to help the farmers, Government set up a Goshala (a center for feeding cattle) in Ramapura Hobli about 20 kms away from Anisha Resource Center. Every morning, farmers took their cattle to the Goshala and returned in the evening after feeding them with the limited fodder that was provided to each animal. As these animals were weak without fodder, they were exhausted after walking 40 kms to and from the Ghoshala every day. So, in order to save them, farmers requested the government to supply fodder to Martalli panchayat. Government heeded to their request and supplied 3 tons of fodder/week. However, this quantity was insufficient to feed all the cattle in Martalli Panchayat. So, Anisha intervened and requested the government to send more fodder for this Panchayat. In response, officials visited and took stock of the livestock and sent additional fodder.

Apart from Goshala, some private organizations also set up a feeding center in Odakahalla Village, about 12 kms from Anisha Resource Center. Anisha requested these organizations to help the farmers of Martalli Panchayat and as such cattle from Bidarahalli, Kadaburu, Huchappanadodi and other villages were benefitted from this feeding Center. Fresh maize stalk were brought from faraway places, anywhere between 300 and 500 kms, and spread on the ground. The stronger animals would race to eat and weaker ones have to return without anything.

Again to save these animals, the only assets of these farmers, Anisha intervened and got 1.5 tons of fodder for each farmer was supplied by Anisha. 320 cattle belonging to 33 farmers were saved. Farmers were very happy and expressed that these cattle provide them livelihood (milk, curds and excess farmyard manure are sold) and many a times they also rescued their families from financial crisis. They cannot imagine their lives without these animals.

Anisha received a total fund of INR 5,41,799 and utilized INR 2,97,000 on its activities.

Remaining INR 2,44,799 is with ANISHA and will be used as “Emergency Fund for Cattle Rescue” whenever needed.

Cattle photos



Grazing and resting

8. PROGRAMS WITH SCHOOL STUDENTS

a) Agricultural Sustainability through Children’s Organic Kitchen Garden

In 2016, Children’s Organic Kitchen Garden Program was started in 23 schools of Ponnachi, Madeshwara Bhatta and Martalli Panchayats. This program continued through 2017 and 2018.

As the region is drought prone and the communities suffer from urban migration in search of livelihood, schooling becomes unstable for many children. The mid-day meals scheme of the State Government has indicated positive results in retaining children in schools. Many studies were conducted regarding the health and wellbeing of the children and one such study revealed that the mid-day meal satisfies hunger, but does not address the nutritional needs of a healthy child.

The primary aim of Organic Kitchen Garden Program is to develop sustainable kitchen gardens and to improve the food and economic security of participating children and their families in the panchayats of Martalli, Ponnachi, and M.M. Hills of Chamarajnagar District in Karnataka State.

(See Annex 1 for detailed report prepared by Marilyn Shrink of SD USA)

b) Educational Support Program

65 children of small and marginal farmers and landless families are supported to continue their schooling from 8th to 10th Grades. Through Anisha’s support, five students could pursue their education in Martalli Pre University College. Three students are in 11th grade and two are in 12th grade. Anisha also supplied notebooks to 6th and 7th grade students.

10th grade students were finding it hard to understand Math and Science subjects. So, they requested Anisha to help them with some additional coaching. Anisha hired a local teacher to provide special tuitions for these students for two hours everyday. This helped the students to get through their 10th grade.

Through Anisha, some students were taken for an educational tour to Mysore Museum, Medical College, Manavana Bhavan, Indira Gandhi Museum, Mysore zoo and Ranganathitu Bird Sanctuary.



Children at Indira Gandhi Museum

After the tour, a two-day camp on Organic Kitchen Gardening was held at Anisha. The camp focused on raising a vegetable garden in their backyards using organic methods.

The older students who completed their 10th grades through Anisha's educational support program are pursuing their higher education. Sometimes, these students visit ANISHA to share their experiences and encourage other students to continue their higher education. This boosts the self-confidence of the students.

ANISHA meets the teachers periodically to review the progress of its students.

During the agricultural season, mothers of 41 children contributed a day's free labor to ANISHA Resource Center.

Case study of Promada

I am Promada, a 9th Grade student of St. Mary's High School. I have an older brother and a younger sister. My father, Puttaswamy works as a coolie in mines and quarries and earns Rs.450/day. He visits us every 3 months and brings a meager amount of his earning to the family. This amount is not sufficient to run the family. So my mother also goes out to work as agricultural coolie and earns Rs.200/day. She gets this work only for two/three months in a year. We have ½ an acre of dry land and we mainly depend on rains to cultivate this small piece of land. My father comes home during agricultural season. He will plough and sow the seeds and then will leave for his quarry/mine work. My mother will take care of all other farm activities in his absence. Our family could not afford to send my older brother to school. So he had to discontinue school and work as a JCB helper. From 2016, I am involved in the kitchen garden program and Anisha identified me and extended its support to continue my education. If not for Anisha, I would have also stopped going to school like my brother. Now, I am very confident that I will continue my education. I participate in all programs of Anisha.



Promada with his mother Shoba

Additional Activities in Schools

A Science Project was held in February 2018 in St. Charles Rural High School of Oddaradoddi Village. The main aim of this project was to introduce alternative energy models and to uncover the hidden innovative abilities of the students. Workable models like solar power, wind energy, gohar gas, grey water recycling, rainwater harvesting were introduced. It was very difficult for the students to mobilize the materials for some of the models. Also, it took a long time to motivate the students to collect the required materials for creating the models. This project took more than ten days to explain all the concepts in detail and to make the students understand the functioning of each and every energy model.

On February 3rd, 2018, an Exhibition of all the models was organized and the School Correspondent inaugurated the event. Neighboring schools of Martalli Panchayat and public were invited for this exhibition. Everyone was very interested to see the models, as they were practical and useful. Models of eco toilets, urinals, rainwater harvest, and natural refrigerator were on display. The main attractions were eco toilets and urinals. The response from students, teachers and public was very positive. We spoke to some of the parents and they were surprised that their children had so much innovative skills. They expressed that schools should be proactive and unearth the innovative skills of the students.



Science Exhibition at St.Charles Rural High School

9. RESOURCE CENTER DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

Resource Center maintenance

Resource Center land, solar panels and batteries, solar fencing, two bore wells,

buildings, vehicles, water pumping motors and cows are well maintained regularly. The solar fencing was cleaned twice a year for efficient functioning. This is a recurring activity.

Valli, was called as resource person for several farmers training at GKVK and at Raitha Samparka Kendra on different issues like Importance of Native Seed Conservation and Farmers Rights and Impact of chemical farming to tribal children.

	
<p>Training for farmers on Native seed conservation and farmers rights at GKVK, Chamarajnaragar</p>	<p>Training to tribal children on impact of chemical farming at Bandipure, Gundulpet Taluk.</p>

11. Vistor's to Anisha

- On 12.02.2017 Dr.Banjagere Jayaprakash, Chairman, Kannada Book Authority, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore.
- Mr.Shivananja, Head Master of Odayarapallya School visited along with farmers on 19.4.2017
- Dr.Naresh and Dr.Chandrakala Hangagi, Scientists from KRishi vignana Kendra (KVK), Chamarajnaragar, government of India brought farmers for exposure visits twice to Anisha on 3.8.2017.
- Dr. Niranjan Aradya Scientists from Gandhi Krishi Vignana Kendra (GKVK) Bangalore, visited Anisha and also provided the Rajagira (Amaranth) seeds.



Chamarajnaragar Farmers exposure to Anisha

12. CONCLUSION

Overall, year 2017 rainfall was good, streams and check dams were overflowing, crop yield was good and everyone was happy. After many years, our annual report has replaced the phrases “no rain, severe drought, bad year for farmers” with auspicious phrases like “good rainfall, overflowing streams, good harvest and happy farmers”.

Anisha played a big role in sourcing seeds from various places and in negotiating with the Agriculture Department for finger millet seeds. This helped farmers to sow on time, pests were less and in turn yield was good. All the planned activities in 2017 were successfully accomplished and we hope this continues in the coming years too. The kitchen garden project with landless families, tribal communities and school students was effective and the harvests were good. All our activities, such as sourcing seeds, orienting and training students, practical demonstrations and sowing of seeds were all carried out on time, and the schools management extended their full support to implement our kitchen garden program. To honour our program, the schools invited Anisha to harvest the first yield. This was an extremely joyful event. Students and schools have saved seeds for next season and have also contributed to Anisha’s Seed Bank. Many schools are inviting Anisha to train their students in organic kitchen garden and we are putting all our efforts to train as many as possible. Anisha can proudly state that all the activities planned for 2017 were carried out on time and targets were successfully accomplished.

10. THANKS

We thank all the supporters of Anisha, who are supporting for several years without your support we were not able to continue our work. Our sincere thanks to all the individuals and SD Nationals.

Support from SD Nationals and Individuals

1. SD Germany: January to December 2017 for follow up programs of Organic farming.
2. Helmer Family: Partly supported for ‘Agricultural Sustainability through Children’s Organic Kitchen Garden Project’ and Organic Kitchen Garden tribal families.
3. Guru Krupa Foundation and SD USA (partly): Agricultural Sustainability through Children’s Organic Kitchen Garden Project.
4. SD USA: Educational support program for school children.
5. SD Britain: support to Seed Production project.
6. SD Norway: Educational support program especially for dalit children.
7. SD Australia, SD USA, SD Norway, SD Japan, Renee Zimmer from Germany
Howard Aschoff : Support for cattle fodder



Anisha Team with project beneficiaries
and
Susila Dharma members