

# ANNUAL Report JKS



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## Supported By:

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## Summary

Rising cost of agriculture and decreasing production made the agriculture unprofitable especially for small & marginal farmers. With this background, this project was conceptualised to start organically sustainable agriculture with seed bank and agro-forestry among 400 farmers in 10 villages. As it was first year of the project, the focus was to put in place software part of the project. The process started with developing community institutions to manage the whole process and then demonstrating various organic demonstrations among farmers. The community also took the initiative on setting up seed bank and establishing nursery. Capacity building was made an integral part by organising training/workshops and rallies. The project is gaining momentum and moving to achieve desired objectives. The results of the intervention would be more visible in the second year so continued effort with same scale is required.

## Background of the Project

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Traditionally Uttar Pradesh is an agriculture based economy and agriculture and allied activities are the main source of livelihood for nearly 80 % of the population and out of the total population belonging to farming community nearly 80 % belongs to small, marginal and landless farmers.

Eastern Uttar Pradesh though rich in agricultural potentials, the area is one of the lowest in India in terms of Human Development Index. The area is a thickly populated region whose economy is based mainly on agriculture. In the name of industrialization there are some sugar mills, which provide seasonal employment to unskilled labor. The fertilizer plant became sick and has been closed down.

The main occupation of the region is agriculture. The area is very fertile and both crops Rabi (winter) and Kharif (summer) crops are grown. The main produce of the area are wheat, paddy, sugarcane and oilseeds. Though the region has high potential for Arhar (*Cajanus cajan*) and other pulse plantation but area under these two is diminishing every year. The land is very suitable for sugarcane production and hence there are a few sugar mills in the region. Almost 82 per cent of the families are marginal farmers. An estimated 15 to 20 per cent families are landless. This small landholding cannot provide for the families livelihood for the whole year. The wage rates in the villages are very poor Rs 30 to 50 per 8 hours work. Migration of labourers is another alternative, which many are adopting. As a consequence of such low literacy rates, poor landholdings, very less number of industries, high rate of population and alcoholism, the economic scenario is very poor.

Within above context, agriculture being the mainstay of the people in the region, this project was envisaged with the support of Sir Dorabji Tata Trust to sustain the productivity of land by promoting sustainable agriculture practices suited to local conditions and building upon capacities of communities.

## Program Findings

Base Line survey has been conducted in all the intervention villages to know the socio-economic profile of the village. The total population is 11360 with female and male population 5382 and 5978 respectively. Approximately 80% population belongs to Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Caste. The format is attached in annexure 1. Then a farm profile has been prepared taking random sample of 10 farmers in each village to know the cost benefit analysis in agriculture. The findings of which are as follows:

Sl.N	Village Name	Field (in acre)	Average Benefit/hect. Of Wheat			Average Benefit/hect. Of Paddy		
			Cost	Production	Benefit	Cost	Production	Benefit

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1.	Chakiya	7.5	4882.00	8880.00	3998.00	3644.00	7840.00	4146.00
2.	Parsauni	10.36	4622.00	9059.00	4437.00	3751.00	10865.00	7114.00
3.	Kolhua	12.96	5452.00	10555.00	5102.00	5635.00	9938.00	4302.00
4.	Belwa	6.26	5007.00	12220.00	7212.00	4610.00	12444.00	7833.00
5.	Natawan	3.33	6097.00	12297.00	6199.00	4725.00	13033.00	8307.00
6.	Mathia	20.16	4995.00	8437.00	3442.00	4007.00	8402.00	4394.00
7.	Bhaishi Naresh	19.23	6599.00	9547.00	2948.00	5120.00	9282.00	4162.00
8.	Tendua Khurd	13.03	7165.00	12916.00	5751.00	5521.00	12041.00	6519.00
9.	Amdiha	10.93	7602.00	13174.00	5571.00	7586.00	19968.00	5382.00
10.	Baijudeeha	11.16	3264.00	9661.00	6397.00	3567.00	8106.00	4539.00

A detailed Participatory Learning Action was done all the intervention villages. It was a participatory process and also used for identification of target group. The PLA of the village provides a detail account of socio-economic status of village and people relation to various services in the village. A detailed PLA of one village has been attached in annexure 2.

## Fulfilment of objectives

The programme tried to achieve the objectives by building strong community institutions which will be instrumental in achieving objectives of the project not only during the project period but also after the project. The following progress has been made vis a vis objectives set in the project:

- There have been 25 demonstrations in intervention villages on different organic agricultural practices like NADEP Compost, Vermi Compost, Vermi Wash, Cow Pat Pit and Pitcher Compost. During formation of farmer club in villages, people have been identified who were interested in promoting these technologies among villagers and could maintain these for exhibition. Then these demonstrations were given in the fields and houses of these selected people.



- The community institutions have been built in each village to promote the cause of sustainable agriculture. In each intervention village farmer club has been formed of 40-50 farmers with whom efforts are being done to adopt sustainable agriculture practices.

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Presently, 10 farmers club in 10 villages contains 500 farmers with whom organic agriculture practices and integrated farming practices are being promoted. Women being playing the important part in agriculture were encouraged to be part of farmer club. There are 280 women in farmer clubs out of 500 farmers.

- There have been regular discussions in monthly meetings among farmer club members on NREGA. Besides this an awareness rally has been organised covering 10 villages and open discussion was organised on issues and challenges in NREGA at field level.



## Project Design and Implementation

The project was initiated with appointment of Project Coordinator. With the orientation of Project Coordinator about the project, a strategy was charted out regarding functional implementation of the project. The following points gives account of step by step activities and approach behind each activity:

- First of all, the process started with identification of motivator in the villages. It was decided that women would be encouraged to take this role and at least 5 out of 10 motivator should be women. The motivator should be literate and have inclination towards working with people or socially active. The identification started with general meetings in the village telling about the organisation and project. In this process, motivator has been identified who have shown interest and complied the above criteria. Presently there are 4 female and 6 male are working as motivators. These motivators facilitate the village meetings and help the farmers on different aspects of agriculture in the village.
- Then to know the villages holistically baseline survey as well as PLA exercise was done. Baseline survey was done by motivators under the guidance of Project Coordinator. To conduct the PLA exercise in the villages, a field level workshop was organised where PLA was done by resource person with all the motivators to make them understand the process. Then it was done by project coordinator with the help of motivator in their respective villages. This way motivator's understanding was built and their capacity was strengthened to conduct the exercise. Besides baseline and PLA, farm profile has been done of 100 farmers on random basis to know the present status of cost-benefit in



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agriculture so that at end of the project change could be seen.

- A five day residential cum field training on organic farming was organised for motivators so that they could understand the process of organic farming and could promote and facilitate the organic farming among farmers. This training was organised after establishing our presence in villages and before forming farming club so that motivators have reasonable knowledge when they go among farmers.



- Community institutions being bedrock of the whole process, farmers club has been formed in each village. The selection of the farmers has been done on the basis of wealth ranking done in PLA. Only small & marginal farmers have been targeted having land below 3 acre. Presently there are 10 farmer club having 500 farmers. Every month on a fixed date meeting is organised with farmer clubs and proceedings of the meetings are recorded in register. Problems related to agriculture are discussed in these meetings and village motivators follow up the matter with particular farmer.
- Two day training was also organised for 400 farmers on organic aspects covering manure, seed treatment and weed & pest management. This training was done village wise and individual contact was followed by village motivators to facilitate the process at farmer's field level.



- In each village a seed bank has been established with the objective of quality and timely availability of seed. In farmer club meetings, a person has been appointed with consensus whose responsibility would be to purchase and make available the seed on time. In future JKS would focus on seed production and greater participation of farmer club in seed purchasing.

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- An awareness rally has been organised covering 10 villages and open discussion was organised on issues and challenges in NREGA at field level. The organisation is in process of preparing a data bank of farmer club members regarding NREGA status.
- The nursery development had twin objectives. First, availability of good quality saplings to farmers and developing 10 nursery persons who could take up nursery as entrepreneurial activity. Due to second objective this process took a longer time than expected because the idea was to find out such people specially youths who could take up it as entrepreneurial activity. After lot of discussion and meetings nursery person has been identified in all the villages. The progress is in different stages regarding site development, water for saplings and procuring minor tools kits. The nursery will be made functional since January. Regarding selection of species, details discussion was done with villagers and list was prepared.

## **Project Outputs and Dissemination**

The major outputs of the project so far are as follows:

- The village motivator has been identified and trained
- 25 organic demonstration has been done
- 10 farmer club has been formed covering 500 small & marginal farmers
- Nursery persons has been identified and variety selection has been done with community participation
- Seed bank established in villages
- A good understanding was developed among farmer club members on NREGA

## **Capacity Building**

The following trainings have been organised so far:

- Field based training was organised for village resource person on PLA exercise and their understanding was developed on whole exercise. Then they themselves facilitated the whole process in their respected village under the guidance of Project Coordinator
- A five day residential training was organised for village motivators to orient and train them on different organic methods and practices. The village motivators are now facilitating the process among villages by motivating them, demonstrating them and solving their problems on different aspects of organic practices.
- Then two day training was also organised for 400 farmers on different aspects of organic agriculture.

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## **Project Management Section**

The project is headed by Programme Director who provides technical and management support. The Project Coordinator is supported by 10 village motivators who are responsible for implementation of project activities. Accounts support is provided by a part time accountant.

Monthly meeting is organised with village motivator by project coordinator to review the monthly work and plan for next month. Thorough discussion is done of issues, problems and strategy at the field level. It is done on 2<sup>nd</sup> of every month and monthly report is prepared by the Project Coordinator.

Then quarterly Review & Planning is done under the supervision of Project Director. Besides discussing the issues and problems at field level, this meeting tries to set the quarterly indicators and responsibilities of project staff.

## **Impact**

The primary level impacts of the programme have started emerging of the project. The Out of 400 targeted farmers; around 30% have started to apply one or more organic methods in their farms. The farmers have started recognising the different between grain and seed. Earlier they were using grain as seed. Now with seed bank intervention, acceptability of certified seeds has increased and farmers have started using that in their field. An opinion is also emerging among farmers that this way their production is increasing. Regular discussion with farmers on NREGA is also bringing results as applications are being put by the farmers for the demand of job to Village Sarpanch and Block Development Officer. So far around 150 applications have been put in 10 intervention villages.

Moreover, farmer club formed in the village are developing the practice of regular monthly meetings, recording of minutes and discussion on agriculture related problems. With regular support and direction, these farmers club could emerge as strong community institutions.

## **Overall Assessment**

Programme has begun in right direction. Though switching from chemical fertilizer centred agriculture to organic agriculture has fear among farmers to lessen their produce but initiative is gaining momentum and almost 30% farmers started out of targeted farmers.

Community process is also moving in right direction and after initials hiccups, farmers club getting

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strengthened and started deliberating serious issues relating to agriculture and NREGA.

It took more time than expected to start the nursery process because of finding right person for the job. But now basic work started after identifying nursery person and it would be integrated in whole process to maximise the benefits of integrated farming. Seed bank intervention has been a very constructive activity and opinion is emerging among farmers of its benefits.

## **Recommendations**

Our previous experience on organic agriculture intervention shows that holistic intervention is required to maximise the benefits from organic agriculture intervention. Generally intervention is limited with farmer to reduce the input cost and bring sustainability which of course is primary objective but even farmer are not able to derive the complete benefit of their organic produce because of lack of producer centered association/partnership/federation and marketing support.

It is required to develop such institution and provide marketing support to make it a holistic intervention so that cycle is completed. Besides this, in organic intervention, there is scope to develop small entrepreneurial activity with organically produce material to include more people in the process.

We would like to have the continued support from the Trust to make it a holistic intervention.

