Farmers Participatory Action Research Programme (FPARP)

(Project sponsored by Ministry of Water Resources, Govt. of India)

This project is being implemented in three agro-climatic zones of Tamil Nadu comprising 4 districts, viz., Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Erode and Coimbatore. Under this programme improved technologies viz., Pit method/paired row planting of sugarcane with drip fertigation, Integrated nutrient management, Bio-fertilizer application, Drought management, Trash mulching, In situ trash composting and Vermi-compost are demonstrated to the farmers through participatory approach and the impact of various demonstrations are assessed through the active involvement of the FPARP participants.

Number of farmers who participating in FPARP – 50

Number of FPARP Action sites - 50

Western- Irrigated zone: 19 farmers

North western Semi-arid Zone: 15 farmers

Cauvery delta- Coastal Zone: 16 farmers
Information on conduct of various extension programmes to highlight water conservation issues through FPARP

Awareness Campaigns (In the early stages of FPARP)

- The project was launched with an awareness campaign “Effective water management in sugarcane” at Alathukombai in Erode district of Tamil Nadu on 29.3.2008. Cane growers from various villages of the district participated in the function, besides scientists from Sugarcane Breeding Institute and cane development personnel. Over 70 persons participated in the campaign. Extension publications of SBI were distributed to the cane growers and a leaflet on “Effective utilization of agricultural wastes” was released during the campaign.

- A Cane growers Campaign on “Water management in sugarcane” was conducted on 3.7.2008 at Sethiathope, Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. The campaign was presided over by the District Revenue Officer/Administrator, MRK Co-op sugar mills, Sethiathope. Extension campaign literature was distributed to the cane growers this was followed by an interactive session, during which the cane growers discussed their problems with the scientists and clarified their doubts.

- A two-day awareness campaign at Palacode, Dharmapuri during 14-15 November 2008 with three components viz.,
  - Method demonstrations in the farmers’ fields
  - Training session
  - Participatory planning of activities for implementing FPARP.
Sensitization Campaigns (In the later stages of FPARP)

“More sugarcane crop and income per drop” multimedia campaign

A multimedia campaign on “More sugarcane crop and income per drop” at Palacode during 25 – 26 May 2010. Released a Technical bulletin on “Using laser land levelers to save water”, administered the “Water conservation pledge” to the cane growers and highlighted the need for water conservation measures to be taken by growers, both individually as well as collectively. Video films on ‘Effective utilization of farm wastes’, ‘Scientific sugarcane cultivation practices’ and “Using laser levelers to save water” were screened. An interactive farmer-scientist-cane development session followed the screening to enable the farmers clear their doubts on sugarcane farming in general and water management in particular. An exhibition was also organized at the venue to depict the ways and means to effectively utilize farm wastes and on monitoring and managing internode borers in sugarcane using pheromone traps.

Later, the team of scientists from Sugarcane Breeding Institute and cane development personnel from the sugar factory visited individual sugarcane fields in the area. They inspected the functioning of the Soil Moisture Tensiometers (simple devices used to schedule irrigation) installed in the fields as part of FPARP and discussed with the cane growers on obtaining more yields and income using less water.

- Kisan mela 2009: The highlights of FPARP being implemented at SBI were showcased during Kisan mela held during September 2009.

Sensitization campaign on Water Conservation

A “Sensitization campaign on water conservation” was organized in Sethiathope/East Thanjavur region [Cauvery delta zone] during 14 -16 June 2010.

A meeting was organized at the factory premises of MRK Co-op Sugar Mills as part of the "Sensitization campaign on water conservation"; All the participants were administered the water conservation pledge and interactive sessions were held on importance of water conservation in sugarcane cultivation. The fact that cane yields have not been affected with lesser number of irrigations through FPARP demo plots was stressed. Excessive use of water has always been a problem in this area and FPARP has been playing an effective role in sensitizing the registered cane growers on "water conservation".
conservation measures" and need-based irrigation, it was mentioned. Shri. Ramalingam, an FPARP participant was honoured for obtaining the highest yield in the FPARP trial plot. Video films on scientific sugarcane practices and using laser-land levellers were screened during the meeting. Demonstrations of the prototype of Soil Moisture Indicator, developed by SBI were conducted in the fields of FPARP and non-FPARP participants in Valayamadevi, Perur and Naachiyarpettai villages. They operated the indicator themselves, learned how to use this handy tool in the field to assess soil moisture and offered their feedback.

Western Zone Sensitization campaign

Following this, a one-day sensitization campaign on water conservation was organized on 26 June 2010 in the Western Zone [Bannari Amman Sugars area] to demonstrate the prototype of “Soil Moisture Indicators” in the participants’ fields and distribute seed material. By way of these demonstrations, the farmers were sensitized on water conservation techniques.

World Water day celebrations

- World Water Day was celebrated in Akkaraineagamum village of Coimbatore districts on 25.3.09. A demonstration on how to use Soil Moisture Tensiometers was conducted in the plot of an FPARP participant in Kuttai Munniappan koil thottam, Akkarai negamum, Erode district. A technical bulletin on “How to use tensiometers” was released during the demonstration.
“Use a laser leveler, save water” campaign

As part of FPARP, a campaign, “Use a laser leveler, save water” was conducted at Athipalayam village, Coimbatore district on 6.3.2010 to commemorate the World Water Day. A demonstration of ‘laser leveller’ was conducted in an FPARP farmer’s field, followed by an interactive session. Over 60 persons including cane growers, cane development personnel and scientists took part in the event.

Training in other institutions

As sensitizing the cane growers was one of the objectives of the Project, FPARP participants from all the three zones (four districts) underwent a Training programme on “Water management for sustainable sugarcane production” at Irrigation Management Training Institute, Tiruchirappalli on 6.1.2010.

Study tour

A Study tour was organized as part of FPARP and all the FPARP participants were exposed to various water management practices being adopted by progressive farmers of Tamil Nadu. A visit to Sugarcane Research Station (TNAU), Sirugamani was also organized through FPARP on 7.1.2010.

Video Film

FPARP experiences at SBI have been documented and a Video film is being prepared out of it.

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