

Theme	Social Forestry
Title	Social Forestry- Commercially Viable Land-use Alternative for Small-holder Farmers
State	Telangana
District	Bhadradi Kothagudem
Implementing Agency	Society for Sampurna Grama Swaraj (SSGS)
Evaluation Agency	iKOnet Research & Consultants Private Limited, Kolkata
Date of Submission	July, 2013

Executive Summary

Study Objectives: To assess if (a) the programme provided a commercially viable land-use options for the poor; (b) helped in hedging risks against crop failure; and (c) environmental benefits accrued to village communities as result of large scale afforestation.

Key Findings:

- Post the intervention, farmers' income increased by 10-12%.
- Relative expenditure on food items increased proportionally to the income, average expenditure on health increased by 92% and household expenditure on education increased by 90%.
- A 2% decrease in illiteracy amongst children of 5-14 years and 2% decrease in school drop-outs among beneficiary families was observed. Further, over 11% of children of the beneficiaries attended university.
- Post intervention, expenditure on sanitation was noted leading to reduction in open defecation practice in the project area.
- Expenditure on asset creation increased i.e. 70% of beneficiaries invested in land and 60% of beneficiaries invested in agricultural equipment, irrigation facilities & bore-wells respectively. Further, more on than 40% beneficiaries invested in construction of pucca houses and in other financial instruments (fixed deposit & insurance).
- About 62% of beneficiaries accessed loans from various formal financial sources, with the SF plantation as security which reduced the loan burden on the farmers by 23%.
- Annually, about 1% fallow land was brought under Social Forestry (SF) plantation i.e. 262 acres of fallow lands with no productive usage in the sample region have been brought under SF plantation.

Areas of Improvement:

- To assure sustainability of social forestry plantation in long run, intercropping with food crops may be encouraged to ensure better food security.
- Empower Sanghas to provide micro credit for other agricultural crops to existing beneficiaries to ensure long term sustainability. Further, Sanghas could be strengthened to engage in supply of agricultural inputs as well as act as knowledge hub to other farmers.

- Sanghas could be tied up with national procurement networks for other agricultural commodities produced in the village and also act as a link for the delivery of various governmental social development activities, such as agriculture extension of other commodities, etc.

Please write to us at: itcmsk@itc.in for the full study