

Study tour to India on best practices of Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs) Ethiopia team visit to India



15th – 24th November 2023

Report



APMAS

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Background

The project “Green Innovation Centers for the Agriculture and Food Sector” (hereafter called the project, Green Innovation Centre, or GIC project) is part of the special initiative “Transformation of Agricultural and Food Systems” (SI AGER) formerly called “ONE WORLD – No Hunger” (SEWOH) of Germany’s Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project addresses poverty and hunger by establishing Green Innovation Centers for the agriculture and food sector in 15 countries, amongst them India. For the project in India, local innovation systems, competence development and the establishment of farmer organizations are crucial means to achieve the main goals. In addition, the project is committed to the cross-cutting issues of, agroecology, climate change adaptation, renewable energy, gender equality, and youth employment. The project will organize an exposure visit for an Ethiopian delegation from the GIZ project “Strengthening Rural Value Chains). The delegation will consist of 11 people. The main purpose of the trip is to learn about the FPO development and support schemes available in India.

A Study Tour on Best Practices of Farmer Producer Organizations in India jointly by GIZ and APMAS was conducted for a delegation of Ethiopia for ten days from 15-11-2023 to 24-11-2023. A team of ten members from Ethiopia has arrived in India. They include policy makers, Central Agriculture Ministry officials and Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) officials.

Objectives:

- Share experience on available policy and policy instruments that support Farmers Producer Organization (FPO) and role of government services
- Identify and learn about the best organizational model to transit from Farmers production cluster to Farmer Production Company and institutional arrangement to support the transition.
- Understand the difference in legal provisions and operational modes of Farmer Production Company, cooperative, and Private Ltd Companies.
- Identify and learn about the best land governance model of Farmer Production Company and institutional arrangement for the same

Program design

The expectations from the team were collected and the programme was designed with focus on three key elements: Interactions with eminent institutions / persons in the sector, field visit and policy recommendations to be taken up. Based on the study tour objective of the team a field visit was arranged in three states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Their details as follows:

State	Visited organization & Place	Organized by/ arranged by	Facilitators/Support
Maharashtra	Krushi Vignyan kendra (KVK), Baramathi, Pune	KVK & GIZ	Ajit Bhor -GIZ & Srinivas - APMAS
	Krushikalpana Farmers producer company, Nashik	GIZ	Ajit Bhor & Kharthik -GIZ & Srinivas - APMAS
	Savithribai Phule Goat farmers producer company, Sinnar	GIZ	Ajit Bhor & Kharthik -GIZ & Srinivas - APMAS
	Sahyadri Farms, Nashik	Sahyadri Farms & GIZ	Ajit Bhor & Kharthik -GIZ & Srinivas - APMAS
Karnataka	Bengaluru – Two days training Sessions, panel discussion	GIZ & APMAS	CS Reddy-APMAS, S.Ramalakshmi- APMAS, NV,Ramana-APMAS, G Srinivas-APMAS, Ragini – Vrutti, Narasimha Murthy-Vrutti, Lisa- GIZ, Dhanunjay – GIZ, Regina- GIZ
Andhra Pradesh	Madanapalle-Annamayya Dist. Kondaigaripalle RS & GRS, Reddivaripalle RS & GRS and Nimmanapalle FPC	APMAS	N.VinayakReddy- APMAS, Madanapalle, Annamayya District APMAS team/staff, S.Ramalakshmi – APMAS, Narasimha Murthy-Vrutti, G Srinivas- APMAS
	Tomoto market, Kurbalakota & Valmikipuram FPC activities MTomoto federation		

Expectations received from the team are:

- Brief explanation on Indian policy and policy instruments /legal frameworks/ regarding transition from individual production to production company.
- Role of government in organizing FPCs including policy support and incentive mechanism to ensure sustainability of FPCs.
- Advantages and disadvantages of organization Production Companies as compared to other farmers organizations.
- How would a FPC have legalized, formed, functioning, government facilitation and organizational arrangements for farmers production companies and their governance structure.
- Performance level of production companies as compared to starting years of establishment.
- Brief explanation on land administration, land use and land tenure policy and how these policies can support land consolidation process of the Farmers producer company.
- Brief explanation on how the FPC access to extension services including institutional framework for the same

As per their expectations and objective of the tour, team visited various farmer producers' organizations in three states and saw the programs conducted by them, discussed with the members, board of directors and staff etc. of the various organizations and learned about the management and implementation of the organizations. Government and non-government Organizations support in formation of Farmer Producer Organizations of India, relationship between organizations, various policies in India for Farmer Producer Organizations.

Process:

Maharashtra state:

Agricultural Development Trust, Baramati:

- Was established in 1967 with moto of 'seeing is believing' to overcome the impact of drought and reduce rainfed dependent agriculture
 - Has social, education, research, extension, women empowerment,
- Basically, to support SHFs, KVK under the trust was established before 30 years

Key objectives are:

- Service provision (e.g training, soil test for farmer's plot)
- Conduct research, demonstrate and provide proven technologies for FPO
- Provide initial seeds (e.g Tomto)
- Education center
- Utilizing innovation and knowledge exchange between India and other nations

Observations: Brief introduction about the trust of Documentary film (journey from its establishment to now), success story:

- Challenges
- Strategy (e.g irrigation) with moto ' seeing is believing'
- Research, demonstration, promotion, and other services
- Partnerships and PPP

Visited areas in the field:

- exhibition on VC-soil, inputs, production, processing, packing
- Different lab. Centers (e.g. soil, protection etc., biofertilizers)
- Horticulture research compound (e.g. grafting, hydroponic, aeroponic)
- Bee keeping training center
- Different solarized and irrigation based research and demonstrations sites
- Introduction of new technology (e.g drip, solarization)
- Strong linkage with development partners (e.g Oxford, Microsoft company to introduce precision agriculture)
- Fee based service for farmers (e.g soil test, advisory)
- Support FPO up to 5 years to ensure standalone business
- Animal feed as potential business feeds (feed production and processing, different machinery was introduced/innovated and marketed)

Innovation and Incubation Center:

- Team also visited the center which is one programme of the Agricultural development trust
- **Key objectives**
 - To foster innovation, research and entrepreneurial activity in technology-based areas
 - Provides platform and support by Budding entrepreneurs to convert their innovative idea into commercially viable product (e.g biscuit from millet, milk storage technology under room temperature, animal feeds, sprout meal)
 - Generally, the center support entrepreneurs for new business/idea/venture, standardized, branding, licensing and link them to finance for production/multiplication of their products
 - Mainly support the entrepreneurs across the agricultural value chains to change to viable business



Key success story to use as take away message from 1st day tour:

- Clear institutional set up and support is critical to support the agriculture sector
 - Adequate land for all infrastructure for (building, labs, testing etc) be available by govt
- Innovation and incubation is very important potential youth to create their own business
 - Critical to convince policy maker and political leaders to establish such institutions
- Commitment of government for supporting such institution (e.g anatomy of internal revenue for re-investment)
 - E.g Enabling environment for internal revenue generation and re-investment for such types of institutes
- The institutions are equipped by calibrated professionals and facilities
- The intervention approach is end to end across the value chain
- Committed professionals , project base deployment
- Marketing is the major success factor
- Agri-tech companies integration
- ‘Seeing is believing’ approach is convincing SHFs to uptake the technologies
- Strong documentation to transfer to next generation
- Recognition for the innovators/professionals/NGOs/etc for their contribution to the agri-sector
- Starting from the smallest # and identifying visionary leading farmer

Krushinavakalpana Farmer Producer Company Limited:

- Initially organized as farmers self-help group (FSHG), 20-30 members per group with no clustering farm plots
- Is non-government Company and established in 2019 with authorized share capital 1.5 mill Rupee.
- Started with one commodity, but now three (soybean, Tomato and Onion)
- Initially was supported by NGOs including GIZ (e.g technical and infrastructure). Support by GIZ declined through time and now completely stopped
- Key objectives were to ensure input and output marketing- reduce middlemen
- Every FSHG found in 45 villages should buy at least 1 share from the company, and currently have 500 shareholders
- Any FSHG could open bank account through 2 members signatories (the president & Secretary)
- Any FSHG couldn't be registered, but legally recognized to accept government support scheme
- Providing the service from production to marketing
- Shares at the company level are not sold but transferable through the approval of the board
- The company provide the following service members and Non-Members
 - Provides Input with 10% discount to members and 5% to Non –members since the company buy from the producers with discount rate
 - Purchase products from the members, incentive scheme in terms of quality
 - Provide market information for the members on monthly base
 - Conduct extension work (e.g demonstration, training)
 - Minimum requirement of FSHG to be shareholder in a Company
 - Each group should be organized one commodity based across VC
 - Every farmers should use inputs as per recommendation, no inputs (Fertilizer or Seed shortage)
 - Should monthly based saving at least for 2-3 years before joining a company
 - Every group should buy share as per MOU and AOA
 - should work together and adopt technologies
 - Each group has chairman and secretary, voluntary basis
 - Benefit of share company for the farmers
 - No restriction to sale share and geography
 - Autonomous and no gov't interference
 - Get incentive scheme (soft loan without collateral, tax exemption, subsidy, matching equity grant)
 - Aggregation
 - Based on Contract marketing and/or contract farming for processor
 - Provide regular market information
 - Every group supposed to supply at least 1-3 tons and 2-3 tons
 - Company buy with competitive price and even premium for quality product
 - Payment is effective within 24 hrs through bank (no cash receipt is permitted)
 - No middle -men intervention in the marketing process

Savitribai Phule Goat Farming Producer Company Limited:

- A Local Non-profit organization (Yuvamira) initially stated to organize women only groups in 30 village and now in 100 village
- Provided training
- Nalanda foundation help financial support
- The non-profit organization help them to form producer company
- Key duties of the company
- Provide extension and other service for the member (e.g veterinary, insurance, training, demonstration), two mobile ambulances equipped with diagnostic facility
- Inputs (e.g fodder seeds) at marginal cost
- Weight based goat sale systems
- Goat milk collection at 7 centers up to 1,200 L per day, processing , branded and selling to local market in form of milk, cheese, ghee,
- Employed tough milk adulteration quality test



Key lessons to be taken as key messages:

- Capacity building support and facilitation at initial stages
- Company's business is led by professionals indicating sustainability
- Their focus is mainly on market linkage in avoid/minimize middlemen
- Enabling environment
- National policy and company act favor farmers' Company, but governing structure is the same as other shareholders
- Trust Building (e.g demand-based and discount input supply, reliable market information, service such training and exposure visits)
- Access to credit service, no shortage of cash during bulking
- Diverse based income generation across commodity value chain at Company level – sustainability
- Land adjustment is not mandatory to created farmer producer groups

Way forwards from the reflection 2nd day reflection:

- Special support by different development partners on capacity building (physical, human and technical) of the newly established company
- Commitment of MOA to establish producer company
- Conduct feasibility study and work on policy and Company act creating enabling environment for farmer producer company while starting as pilot testing at some locations
- Strongly work on missing links such as value addition, marketing
- Focus on one or two commodities

Sahyadri Farmers Producer Company:

- Sahyadri is India's largest FPO, 13 years in the industry
- Founded by one of cooperative led man
- Business model is hybrid types and mainly on focus on five key pillars of the FPO
- Farmer shareholders are individual, SHGs and sub-company
- Led by highly professionals paying super salary
- Largest integrated value chain (equity, transparency, use of technology to make trust tangible)
- Farm to fork traceability, Farmer-lead initiate
- Quality, safety and hygiene (international market focus)
- To achieve the key pillars, the following are their key strategies
- Market linkage beyond domestic, Infrastructure
- Capital builds up (e.g sale share, return through value addition)
- Use of talented and high professions young generations



The status after 15 years

- Has 18,000 (+) shareholder/farmers and addressed 252(+) villages,
- 42 companies and 700 farmers have shares with equal voting right
- Share are non-tradeable but transferrable through boards approval
- Scaled from one to more commodities (e.g from grape to Tomato, Onion)
- Value addition from imported row product (e.g Cashew, Almond, corn)
- have full fleshed processing plants, qualified professionals
- Export 100 (+) tones per annum to 42(+) countries
- Use digital based marketing information and 12,000 (+) ha of land
- Invested to significantly increase on productivity to reduce cost of production per Kg and increase farmer's return- developed trust
- Significantly work on value addition and input-output market linkage

Company's special support from the government

- Very good enabling environment for FPO and Subsidy and equity grant fund from Gov't
- Beneficiary from different tax exemption period
- Food items eg rice is tax exempted and other commodities have different rates set by law and maximum is 30% same as to all companies
- If farmers are directly selling to market, no taxes is paid
- No obligation of member farmers to sell to the company.
- Declared autonomy business (e.g use earned USD for re-investment and import) and no interference at all
- Strong support for processing plant through low interest rate (9-12%) for long term loan
- Focus on basic success factors; Increase Productivity to lower production cost (our reference be from global data) Quality and market (branding)

In Bangaluru, Karnataka State – Experience of APMAS and Vrutti (Brief summary of documentary film, presentation)

Experience of APMAS

- The Green Innovation center established in 2016 to operate in 3 states of India (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Bihar) incubating 165 FPOs
- APMAS is an implementation partners of various projects head quartered at Hyderabad (doing training & capacity development, promoting branding, help farmers to use data)
- 120K farmers approached from product development to marketing on tomato with other development partners
- Participated in the technology implementation tested and adopted by the govt
- In 2003, a new thought of FPC came in to existence other than Cooperatives which has been existed for the last 150 years
- FPC has a hybrid model which took good features from Coops and included new from business concept
- Farmers Group (RS) or village level Farmers association (GRS) with farmers of 10 – 20 could establish a group and apply for FPCs
- Board of directors could be ranges from 5-7 elected democratically
- All activities which could fetch profit to members be decided by BoDs
- National bank for Agriculture and rural development (NABARD) has the obligation to support FPCs and apex level FPOs to extend credit
- Promotion of FPCs is conducted by NGOs, not by the govt
- FPCs eligible to access equity grant that could double their capital
- Credit guarantee scheme is provided by the govt
- The land ownership being belongs to the citizen has significantly improve productivity and then livelihoods
- Advanced level of FPCs is not managed by professional leadership, but by professional management. Boards couldn't necessarily professional
- Coops laws are either conventional or liberated once
- Self Help Group (SHG) concept is 30 years old but, it is the fashion of today that a group could access credit from National bank of India without collateral
- FPC voting right is one member, one vote (all members have equal right)
- Registration Certificated issues in a month from the date of application to FPCs
- Indian FPCs focused on geographical center than commodities
- FPOs are registered on desk review by Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) like a company
- The cost of registration very high and penalty for failure of meeting the legal provisions after registration is so big
- Promotional Costs or privileges of one FPCs :
 - 30K USD for 5 years salary for employees
 - 21K USD for 3 years FPOs management
 - 18 USD for equity grant and
 - 240K USD for credit guarantee scheme
- All policies are under the implementing agencies;
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Small Holer farmers consortium
 - National level project agency
 - NABARD (National Bank for Agri. Development)



The most key success factors for APMAS include;

- Strong foundation of Farmers Informal Groups (FIGs)
- Strong shareholders ownership
- Women representation in the leadership
- FPOs as a multiservice organization
- Optimum use of existing capital
- Strong system orientation
- Continuous capacity building
- FPOs linkages
- Promoting federations

Key challenges of FPOs;

- Internal:
 - Capital, HR, Skill set and System
- External;
 - Credit facility (in adequate), Awareness
 - Time bound support
 - Input provision and supply

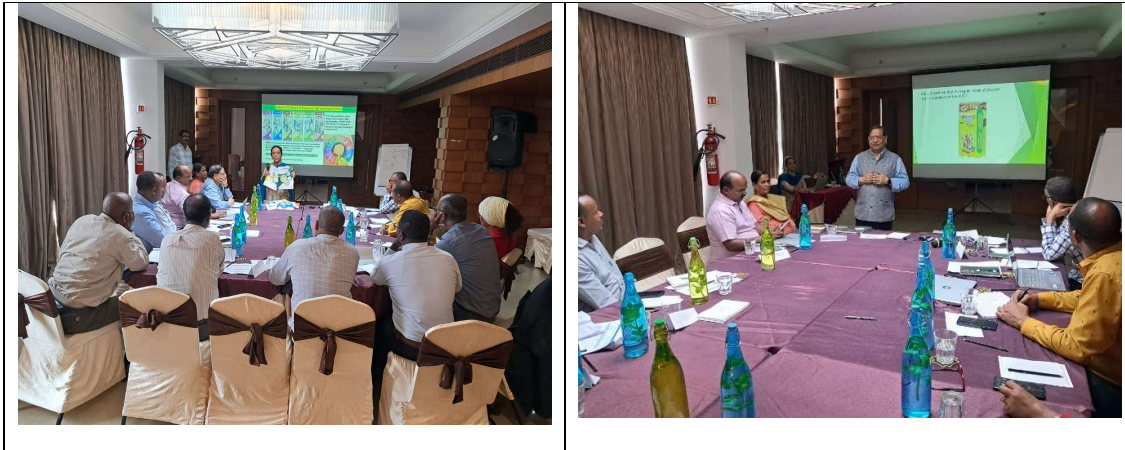
Experience of Vrutti

The 3-Fold model impact structure

- Vutti is implementing partner
- Covers Farmers and enterprises;
 - Directly facilitate FPOs, operates in VC , fetches diversified income , value added enterprises, leveling and branding
- It is business acceleration Unit
 - Technology, Service, Collaboration
- Grant is given to FPOs for 2-3 years
- Farmers receive bundle of services
- Women groups and farmers organizations
- Support from Vrutti (activity business) for;
 - Set up
 - Pre-production
 - Production
 - Post production
- Weather Index insurance
- Coverage: Farmers and enterprises

The 3 Fold model

- Value addition, warehouse , leveling and branding
- Market access and connecting with ranges of market systems, brand and products
 - Ecommerce, Member trade, FPOs brands, FPOs shops, Sustainable chains
- Digital operators for planning and marketing



Indian Legal framework FPOs

- A brief summary of FPOs legal framework has three core distinctions ;
 - Coops act (1964)
 - Coops act (1995) Liberalized
 - FPC act (hybrid from Coos and company): This is central /National act
- Distinctions of the three are clearly identified in between on features like;

Key differences between Cooperative Act and Producer Company Act

Features	Cooperative Act, 1964 (Traditional Act)	Cooperative Act (MACS Act, 1995) (Liberal Act)	Producer Company Act
Act	State Act	State Act	Central Act
Formation	Ten individuals each being a member of a different family	Ten individuals each being a member of a different family intend to form a cooperative society, or two or more cooperative societies registered	Ten or more producers or any two or more producer institutions, or a combination of ten or more individuals and producer institutions
Objective	Single objective	Single objective	Multiple Objectives
Issue a certificate of incorporation	60 days	60 days	30 days
Operational area	Restricted, discretionary	Restricted, with in a geographic area. Not beyond the State Boundary	Entire Union of India, as define by their company
Members	Shareholders	Shareholders	Shareholders
Voting right	One member one vote	One member one vote	single vote for every Member
Shares	Non-tradable, Govt. & non-members may contribute share capital. Only Government is permitted to hold more than 1/5th of total shares	Equal Not transferable Members alone can contribute share capital and non-member share capital is forbidden	Equal Transferable but not tradable Members alone can contribute share capital
Benefit to members	Limited dividends on shares	share capital contributed, receive only a limited return as patronage benefit	share capital contributed, receive a limited return as patronage benefit

Rules & Regulations	Bye-laws	Bye-laws	memorandum of association (MoA) Articles of Association (AoA)
Amendments	2/3rds of the members present and voting and registered by the Registrar of Coops concerned within 30 days of the receipt of the amendment proposal.	General Body resolution. Few Sections with approval of Registrar of cooperative	Amended articles together with the copy of the special resolution should be submitted to Registrar within thirty days from the date of its adoption
Size of the Board	Size of board fixed; term of board fixed; composition of board fixed; elections by Registrar; reservations on board.	Multiples of BoD tenure, staggered terms; elections by incumbent board failing which by ad-hoc committee; disqualification of all directors for not conducting elections in time, for not conducting general body meetings in time, for not placing audited accounts before annual general meeting	5 – 15 members
Term of the Board	5 years	3 – 5 years	Maximum 5 years
Promoter body & elections	Elections are to be conducted to the MC by the Registrar of Coops before the expiry of its term	The election of directors shall be conducted within a year of the registration of the cooperative	The election of directors shall be conducted within a period of ninety days of the registration of the Producer Company
Re-election of Directors	Eligible for re-elect /appointment as a director	Should mention in bye-laws	Eligible for re-appointment as a director
Co-opt directors	The Government is empowered to nominate up to three persons or 1/3rd of the total number of MC members whichever is less	Only members elected by General Body. No co-option of directors in the Board.	The Board may co-opt one or more expert directors or an Individual director not exceeding one-fifth of the total number of directors or appoint any other person as additional director for such period as the Board may deem fit: Provided that the expert directors shall not have the right to vote in the election of the Chairman but shall be eligible to be elected as Chairman, if so provided by its articles
Sub-committees	The general body of a society shall constitute a committee in accordance with the bye-law	Based on the need, board may constitute committees	Based on the need, board may constitute committees
Board meetings	At least once in 3 months.	once in every three months and at least four such meetings shall be held in every year	once in every three months and at least four such meetings shall be held in every year
Notice for Board meeting	No such condition	No such condition	CEO shall give notice as aforesaid not less than seven days prior to the date of the meeting of the Board

Quorum for Board meeting	As per bye-laws.	As per bye-laws. However, it would be good 2/3 of total members in the Board.	The quorum for a meeting of the Board shall be one-third of the total strength of directors, subject to a minimum of three.
Seating fee for Board members	A President of the Society may be paid honorarium from the funds of the Society at such rate as may be prescribed.	General Body should decide	Shall be provided in the articles, directors including the co-opted director, may be paid such fees and allowances for attendance at the meetings of the Board, as may be decided by the Members in the general meeting.
CEO appointment	By ROC	Not necessary. Secretary can play a role of CEO	Appointment of CEO is mandate. Appointed by FPO
Company Secretary	Not necessary	Not necessary	Average annual turnover exceeding five crore rupees in each of 3 consecutive FYs shall have a whole-time secretary
Quorum for Annual General Body meeting	As per byelaws. For amendments not less than 2/3 of the members present & voting	As per byelaws. It would be good if more than 50% of the total membership	Unless the articles require a larger number, one-fourth of the total membership shall constitute the quorum at a general meeting
Annual General Body meeting	Yearly two meetings	Within 6 months of closing of financial year	Not more than 15 months shall elapse between the date of AGM and that of the next. A Producer Company shall hold its first AGM within a period of ninety days from the date of its incorporation
Notice period for AGM	As per bylaws	20 days prior notice, if there is any amendment to the bye-laws. Other wise 10 days	Not less than fourteen days prior notice in writing
Appointment of auditor	The Chief Auditor of ROC dept shall audit or a person authorised by him	Should mentioned in Bye-laws. General Body should appoint	Should mentioned in AoA General Body should appoint
Filing returns	shall be filed with the Registrar within 30 days	shall be filed with the Registrar within thirty days	shall be filed with the Registrar within sixty days
Resolution of Dispute	Arbitrator	Tribunal	Arbitrator
Profit sharing	Limited dividends on shares	Commensurate with volume of business	Commensurate with volume of business
Voting right	One member, one vote, but Government and ROC hold veto power	One member, one vote. Members not having transactions with the company cannot vote	One member, one vote. Members not having transactions with the company cannot vote
Government Control	Highly patronized to the extent of interference	Minimal, limited to statutory requirements	Minimal, limited to statutory requirements
Extent of Autonomy	Limited in real world scenario	Fully autonomous, self-ruled within the provisions of Act	Fully autonomous, self-ruled within the provisions of Act
Reserves	Created if there is profit	Created if there is profit	Mandatory to create every year
Relationship with other corporate/business houses/NGOs	Transaction based	Can form collaborations	Producers and corporate entity can together float a producer company

Andhra Pradesh Field visit:

RS- Sri Obuleswar Raithu Sangham & GRS (Village Association)

Team had discussion with 28 groups representatives and one village association members

History

- Established informally in 2017 and has 10 members
- All are farmers, but Women dominated
- Has official account
- Started with monthly based saving, 100 rupee per farmer
- Has internal bylaw, chairperson-secretary- accountant (9 grade complete)-

Objectives

- To mutual service based, saving and credit
- To easily access and/or distribute inputs (feeds, seeds, fertilizer, pesticides) through their coops or Company with at least 15% discount prices
- To get household grocery items at the door with discount price

Status

- Each group member has share from coop association
- Each members has 7200 Rs, taken at least 2 times loans (9000-82000 Rs without collateral)- 12% interest rate
- Has 100,000 Rs capital
- Compete with local lender since served with less interest rate
- Access from coops/Company and distributes inputs timely with 15% discount to their farmer
- Members can easily get 2-5 feed bags on per month on credit base, 100-250 RS benefit with free transport fee
- Future plan
- Ensure business sustainability by income diversification
 - Value addition (e.g millet)
 - Tomato, mushroom production

Reddivaripalli Agricultural Producers (MACS Ltd):

Team had discussion with board of members who are representative of each informal group

History:

- Registered under liberal cooperative act
- Village level association established in 2017 having 28 informal group association, 306 (179 female) members, from 8 villages
- Each individual (farmer) member must buy 10 share (1 share= 100 Rps) a 100 Rs member fee
- Work in two districts

Objectives (why they were established?)

- To get input access easily and in bulk with discount rate
- Prefer coops. Since local support is simpler and more profitable than Company
- Good environment to get gov't support (e.g subsidized transport service, for fixed asset up to 75% subsidy)

Status

- led by executive members (president, secretary and treasure)- 14 board of members
- Has one monthly paid (7500 Rs) worker and all board of directors serve voluntary basis
- From march to now, 1.5 mill Rs income from 20 mill Rs turnover from input-output marketing
- 4mill, 0,93 mill and 1.23 mill Rs average annual capital, profit and amount saved to members
- Current balance sheet
 - Liabilities (1.93 mill Rs) + Asset (1.93 mill Rs)-
 - Share capital 367.2 K Rs (200 K Rs share in FPC chare capital)
- So far shared benefit for each member (200-300 Rs/farmer), added to share

- External (NGOs and Gov's) support
 - Technical capacity building (e.g training, exposure,)
 - Technology (e.g crop and machineries) demonstration and promotion

Their Key challenges:

- Constitutional building
- Construction investment is not supported a per policy/act though upto 75% subsidized policy for construction
- Bureaucratic and time taking to get loan
- Unequal understanding and resistance on investment



Sri Ramaswamy Raithu Sangham (RS) and Kondaiahgaripalle Grama Rythu Sangham (GRS)

All Activities implemented at grassroot level, farmers group level or RS and at village level Association (GRS) were discussed:

- RS are group of farmers organized in groups based on their interest
- The # of Farmers in this SR is 16, # of SR forming GSR is 18
- They are organized in the model f Cooperative by provisional state and get benefit of the provisional government
- Motivation factors for their establishment: good price for their product, low price of inputs, capacity building, reduced cost of cultivation, gov' scheme they enjoyed etc
- Challenges: bringing them together at the initial, bad previous experience by NGOs, shifting traditional rainfed agriculture to irrigation, building trust, shortage of inputs
- Share payment and registration fee payment model
- Regular monthly, quarterly annual meeting
- Monthly and quarter plan prepared
- The strength of FIG, RS and SHG at the grassroot level is key for the strengths of FPO
- To be the member of GRS each RS farmer members pay 100 RS for membership fee (non-refundable), 1000 RS share to get share certificate, 100 RS monthly saving
- They provide need-based services for the farmers (unlimited) whereas government services limited to 2 or 3 types of services, provide transport and risk-free services to member farmers
- Only the member of RS can be the member of GRS

Recommendation to Ethiopian team from community

1. Unity of primary groups (RS)
2. Regular monthly meeting and discussion on important issues
3. Understanding the real need of farmers (need assessment)
4. Continuous capacity building of leaders
5. Transparency- through record keeping

Nimmanapalli Farmers Producer Company Limited

History

- Established in 2018 and registered under central Company act
- Are linseed on fertilizer, seeds, pesticides, output marketing with different license number- but started the business by seed supply
- Governed by board directors- representatives of coops association
- Has mainly 8 groups associations and individual farmers (hybrid)
 - Minimum 100,000 Rs share per cooperative association group + 10,000 member fee
 - Minimum 500 Rs share per individual + 100 Rs member fee
 - Has 1392 (44.7%) farmer members in the Company from
 - 0.91 mill Rs issued share capital
- Give service/sale inputs for anybody but share only for members
- Conduct every year general assembly meeting (mandatory)
- Issued share certificate



Status

- Has one staff paid social mobilizers
- Cash based service for anyone
- Has got bank loan and diversified the business to 143 items (seeds, chemicals, irrigation facilities, fertilizers)
- Has one shop and three warehouse
- Collect products based on demand aggregation and supply to processors
 - During covid, the FPC collected and sale 5.7 ton Tomato
 - So far 400 tons of Tomato collected (by 4 Rs/kg, but local price during that time was 2 Rs/kg) from members and directly sold to processors
- Provide transport service (e.g one tesabi) for associations
- Access market information for FPC federation since they are member
- Use mobile technology to get market information since most members are smartphone users
- Every quarter audit- supported by APMAS
- Got 300 K Rs net benefit (march to till now) after 30 mill Rs turnover and 1.4 mill Rs amount saved to members

Intensive External Support (NGO and Government)

- E.g APMAS Support 1 mill for capital working, established nursery
- Grant base gov't support for custom hiring procurement such as machinery, implement
 - 40% gov't grant, 50% bank loan and 10% FPC contribution
 - GIC supported salary payment for staff up to 5 years with gradual decrease base (100%,75%,50%,25%,0%)
- Vehicle transport procured by 75% gov't support and 25% from Company
- Different Technical training and exposure visits
- Bank loan for business diversification

Their key challenges:

- Tomato's output market challenge due to price fluctuation
- Shortage of animal feeds
- Resistance of farmers for long term investment strategy
- May be dependence to other external support

Tomato Market place:

- It is the largest marketplace in India, 100-150 vehicle for Tomato transport/day
- Farmer s producer 3-4 times/year/plot using drip irrigation
- Farmers aggregate the product, and traders will come from all over India
- Legally registered mediators connect farmers and traders



- Negotiate farmers and traders on the price and time of payment
- The price is determined as per the quality (e.g 300-800 Rs/tray)
- The mediator also rent (2 Rs/tray) tray for farmers to reduce damage and follow the national market price
- The trader pay 10% commission for the mediator (he/she is obliged to follow the payment for the farmers by trader within a week)
- The mediator announce the product ready for price options

- The traders give the price based on the quality
- The trader who gives better price is the winner to procure all product

Role of Trade Office

- Search market outlet across India through e-fresh platform and national market information platform eg: quality and amount required
- Certify quality of Tomato Product
- Supervise the legally and illegally (if any) register mediators to ensure the benefit of the farmers
E.g follow payment (50% in advance payment and 50% within a week)
- 1% is paid by the traders for the trade office logistics and facilities build up

Key challenges

- Less Crop diversification in area may result Tomato market problem
- Price is determined by demand-supply

Farmer's plot visit (Brinjal organic farming)

- Crop intensification farming, five-layer farming (Papaya-Banana- three different vegetables)
 - Based on crop geometry and maturity period
- also practices organic farming
 - use organic seeds, organic fertilizer sources, biopesticides (border crop, trap crop, sticky traps, pheromone trap and solar inspect traps)
- Use improved animal feeds (e.g. copped E-grass, silage)
- Uses animal wasted for biogas
- Technical and demonstration is given by NGO (financially supported by gov't)

Use drip irrigation of all crops

- Estimated price of facility (pipe and nozzle) for 1 ha is about 90 K rupees. (8500 m pipe/ha * 12 Rs/1m pipe)
- Gov't support 90% subsidy for irrigation facility and cost for electric for water pumping and water for irrigation

- AS the result of subsidy, almost all farmers of India use drip irrigation and produce 3-4 times a year
- However, the price for organic and inorganic product is the same at local market
- In general, the livelihood of the farmer's family is good
 - Has continues diversified incomes
 - Ensure nutrient security
 - Good kitchen facilities in their home

Natural Farm -Farmers Chilly and Other Vegetable demonstration plot- Valmikipuram Farmers Producer MACs LID-

- Sprayed or used with drip irrigation
- Use trap crop, sticky traps, pheromone traps, bird perches, solar insect traps, etc
- Farmers are supplied with solar driven sprayer, 1000 lit liquid fertilizer preparation automatic biofertilizer tanks (unit) for farm use and also for sale
- The Automatic solar driven biofertilizer unit has 5 filters
- Sale the liquid biofertilizer to farmers with 5-10 RS/lit
- 50-200 lit/Acre will be used based on the crop growth stage
- It is a company established agri input for farmers, major input supplied greenfeed.
- Specialized in green feed supply
- Started in 2019 and supported by APAMAS, seed and training provided in 2020
- 150 farmers adopted the farm system in the area
- Intercropping different crops including maize within fruit trees, maize as a border crop
- Major commodity chilly and tomato
- Intercrop more than 13 vegetables
- Use different crops as a border crop, trap crop etc
- Control pest naturally, pheromone trap, used different colors to trap insects
- Prepare liquid natural fertilizer from cow dung, water, pulse powder, jaguar, cow urine, handful of fertile soil
- Fermented for a week, sprayed every 15 days and stored only for 15 days



Kurabalakota Women Farmer Producers Mutually Aided Cooperative Society Ltd

History

- The society was established in 2019 by the help of APMAS and other NGOs
- Has 711 small and marginal individuals' women are members
- 65%,33% & 2% are open, backward class, schedule cast, respectively
- Operate in 11-gram Panchayats (village council) has 1.1 mill Rs share capital
- Licensed on fertilizer, pesticides, seeds, shops establishment)
- Governed by women BODs and CEO

Objectives

- To sell seeds/seedlings and other inputs to members and non-members
- To Prepare and sell vegetable seed ball and promote organic farming
- To Give animal health services
- Output marketing (e.g small onion, Tomato and cabbage)

Support

- Significant subsidy support by government departments and NGOs (GIC, APMAS,AEIN)
 - E.g 80% subsidized vegetable seeds by GIC and another project
 - Price stabilization
- Gov't health department gives veterinary tools on subsidy basis
- Strong technical (e.g. training and exposure visit) support by APMAS and other NGOs
- NGOs and others demonstrate and promote different technologies

Status

- About 0.6 mill cumulative profit from 2.5 mill Rs turnover
- Are in good progress in terms of business transaction and profit making
- So far, about 238 MT of products (tomato, onion, cabbage and Tamirland) of output marketing worthing 3.2 mill Rs)

M-Tomato FPC Ltd: A cluster level federation of FPOs in three districts of Andhra Pradesh state

History

- It was established in 2019 and registered under Company Act 2013
- Institutional structure is Federation of mandal level FPOs
- Was established by 24 registered FPOs (8 FPCs + 16 CA) as institutional shareholders, 15,579 (39% women) farmers members
- Minimum require of FPOs to be member
- Must have relevant equity grant fund
- Must be registered as FPC or Cooperative Association (CA)

Objectives

- To become wholesale dealer to supply all types of agri-inputs to FPOs
- To introduce good practice and innovations
- To establish financial and market linkage to support for FPOs
- To mentor and provide handholding support
- To take advocacy regarding farmer collective issues



Support +status

- Promoted by GIZ-APMAS, Go't departments (e.g Horticulture),NABARD, NCDC and SFAC
- Mentoring and handholding support, exposure (institutional and technical aspects.)
- Training on governance, business planning, legal compliance, accounting and bookkeeping
- Establish required linkages and partnerships with key market players
- Initial cost for management and staff salary payment have been supported by GIC project
- eight solar dehydration was established with the aid of S4S technologies as pilot test
- Has cold storage unit supported by state go't and TATA Trust
- The federation is in good progress though their profit is mainly service provision for FPO and farmers

Key Lessons learnt

- All members are voluntary basis
- Gov't scheme favor women association than men (because of many default), the gov't want/believe that any income should go to family through women
- Informal group representatives and village level cooperative association (CA) are board members of CA and FPC, respectively
- Cooperative association can establish FPC, and individual can be a member of both CA and FPCs
- Cooperative Association is established at village level whereas FPC at district level
- Federation level FPC is established by registered FPOs with minimum requirement and at high-level order value chains objectives
- Practically all members have equal vote regardless of association or individual
- Company act give more business opportunity and support for FPC than coop liberal act for CA
- The performer of FPC is very much better than CA
- Diversified business opportunity and better output marketing outlets
- Strong external support, but may create dependence
- FPC is becoming output marketing guarantee for the members
- Since directly aggregate from members and sell to processors by avoiding middlemen
- Local market outlet is preferable for high income generation
- FPC adopted economy of scope by diversifying inputs/services and products to reduce per unit cost and increase efficiency
- FPC federation ensure input-output marketing by linking FPOs to higher input producers and output processors
- Drip irrigation was promoted overall India due to high subsidy support for irrigation facilities, and the same is true for other agri-inputs
- Flexibility to shift between cooperative and company: Village level Association (GRS) established by cooperative act able to establish company, with company act supported by central government
- FPC Federation: both FPC and FPO established as cooperative can be a member of FPC federation
- The service to the farmer is need based and diversified, continuous need assessment
- Strong collaboration between promoting institutions, government and CBBOs

The following are the key learnings shared by the delegation:

1. Enough information gained on the policies and government role in promotion of FPOs. While developing a policy framework, focusing on the institutional support mechanisms, from higher level and institutional development at community level is very important. Policy provisions, incentive mechanism, combination of company act and cooperative act, previlates like guarantee fund, equity grant etc. made the FPOs to thrive in India.
2. Building community institutions and support is one of the important aspects of sustainability of the interventions at farmer level. It is clear that, to ensure the success of FPOs the type of structures evolved, the type of management, processes like membership mobilization, election of leaders, existing legal options and systems etc are required.
3. Role of key stakeholders, collaborations among the institutions and Government departments for implementation and for supporting the farmers is key for sustainability of the FPOs.
4. Commitment of Government is high but over commitment may hinder the sustainability of FPOs in the long run.
5. FPOs are following value chain interventions like Ethiopia. However they should be involved in value addition which is crucial.
6. Mechanization, procurement units, processing units, subsidies etc should be part of the policy framework to support FPOs to sustain.
7. For FPCs to thrive and overcome existing challenges by farmers in Ethiopia we should focus on policy framework, institutional structures and collaborations to
8. Suitable legal framework for FPOs should be worked out for Ethiopia

9. The flexible policy framework & Acts are available for FPOs to succeed. Community knows how to use central and state acts, what type of support they need.
10. Both CBBO and government have clear understanding about their role and interrelation. Incentive system of releases seems good.
11. While focusing on the policy framework we need to focus on the following:
 - a. Mapping of NGOs / organisations who can play key roles in promotion and nurturing of Farmers Production Clusters
 - b. Women membership, leadership should be given priority
 - c. Should create a space for Public - Private partnership
 - d. Market based integrated approach is required for ensuring the success of FPCs
 - e. Quality aspects are important. Hence, we need to focus on digitisation of the data and tracking systems should be focussed
 - f. For FPOs to succeed - Unity is driving; continuous evolution, need based approach, capacity building and systems establishment etc are very important
12. Participants expressed that technology, marketing of farmer produce and competition from the private sector are common problems, which may need more focus in the implementation and also in the policy framework.

Action Points:

1. 5 -10 days team will sit and work on the draft report and will share with GIZ and APMAS for the feedback and inputs
2. Submitting the report with higher officials
3. Sharing the key learnings and suggestions for policy framework with the chief official / bureaucracy.
4. The following suggestions will be considered while providing suggestions for policy framework
 - a. How to include existing Cooperatives, other community collectives and women in the process
 - b. Keeping in view of the financial aspect of the FPCs try to include existing savings groups
 - c. How provincial & central governments should play complementarity rather than compete with each other.
 - d. Developing models and phased manner implementation will be focussed
 - e. Role of other key stakeholders including NGOs will be taken care off.
Feasibility of reviewing existing Act or evolving new chapter / new act will be focused
5. During the process we will see how we can engage GIZ and APMAS.



giz



Study tour to India on best practices of Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs) in India

14th – 24th November 2023 (Ethiopia Team visit – Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh)

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Study tour to India on best practices of Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs) in India

15. – 25. November 2023

	Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks
1	Tue, 14.11.	23:05	Flight from Addis to Mumbai, ET 610, Departure time 23:05		Pick-up by Srinivas (APMAS). Will wait with GIZ Board
2	Wed, 15.11.	07:15	Arrival in Mumbai, Pick-up and Hotel check-in <i>Breakfast and settling down</i>		Hotel Taj Santacruz, Mumbai
		11:00 – 14:00	Cultural tour through Mumbai	Tour operator	Pick up from hotel, luggage to be put in bus
		14:00 – 15:00	Lunch	With Tour operator	
		15:00 – 18:00	Travel to Pune	GIC	
		19:00	Dinner at Hotel and Stay overnight in Pune		O Hotel Pune- Koregaon Park
3	Thur, 16.11.	7:00 – 9:00	Travel to KVK Baramati, Breakfast on the way	GIZ	
		9:00 – 10:00	Centre of Excellence Dairy		
		10:00 – 11:00	KvK – Dutch Greenhouse nursery, Poultry & Goat rearing, Silage making unit, Microbiology lab,		
		11:00 – 12:00	Atal Incubation Centre Baramati		
		12:00	Lunch at Incubation Centre		

	Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks
		12:30 – 13:30	SMART Project funded BTPS pack house (pomegranate and banana value chain)		
		13:00 – 16:00	Travel back to Pune		
		16:00 – 17:00	Meeting with SMART officials		
		18:00 – 19:00	Reflexion session at Hotel		O Hotel Pune- Koregaon Park
		19:00	Dinner at Hotel		
4	Fri, 17.11.	8:30	Travel from Pune to Nashik by car		
		11:00 – 13:00	Visit to GIC-promoted FPC Krushinavakalpana - Interaction with Board of Director (BoD) - Visit of Input Shop, Soya collection centre and Cold storage	GIC	
		13:00 – 14:00	Lunch in Narayangaon		
		16:00 – 17:00	Visit to Women-only Savitribai Phule Goat Farmer Producer Company, Sinnar	GIC	
		18:00	Arrival in Nashik, stay in Hotel over night		
		19:00	Dinner at Hotel		TAJ Nashik - Google Maps
5	Sat, 18.11.	9:00 – 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit FPO Sahyadri Farms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction in training of FPOs: Farmer Training schools ○ Value chain for Grapes and Bananas 	GIC	

Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Understand the model for replication in Ethiopia o Understand the clustering approach of FPOs or FPCs o Challenges and bottlenecks o Finance for FPCs 			
	13:00 – 14:00	Lunch at Sahyadri Farms			
	14:00 – 17:00	Cultural afternoon in Nashik	GIC and tour operator		
	18:00	Reflexion session at Hotel	GIZ Ethiopia	IAJ Nashik - Google Maps	
	19:00	Dinner			
6	Sun, 19.11.	8:30	Breakfast		
		9:30 – 10:30	Reflexion session (optional)	GIZ Ethiopia	
		10:30 – 12:30	Travel to Shirdi airport		
		15:10	Flight from Shirdi to Bangalore, 6E 356		
		16:40	Arrival in Bangalore and transfer to Hotel		La Marvella
		19:00	Dinner with GIC project Director		Restaurant tbd
7	Mo, 20.11.	8:00	Breakfast in Hotel		
		9:00 – 12:00	Pick-up from Hotel and visit to GIC office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome, Getting to know each other 	GIC	At GIC office terrace

Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation on GIC work with Farmer Producer Companies (FPC) or Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) ▪ Understanding the legislation, frameworks, mode of operations, role of NABARD and models for replication of FPCs in Ethiopian context 			
	13:00- 14:00	Lunch	GIC	Restaurant tbd	
	14:00 – 15:30	Present scenario of farmers collectives in Ethiopia – Policies & Practices Expectations of the Delegation	Participants	Training hall at the hotel	
	15:30 – 17:30	India's policy framework for FPOs as farmer-owned business organization	Mr. C.S Reddy, APMAS	Training hall at the hotel	
	17:30 – 18:00	Reflexion session			
	19:00	Dinner with project team			
8	Tu, 21.11.	8:00	Breakfast		
		9:00 – 11:00	APMAS experience in promoting, supporting and incubating FPOs & FPO federations	Interactive Discussions by Mr. CS Reddy / Mrs.Rama	Training hall at the hotel
		11:00 – 13:00	Catalysts – Business model of catalysis in nurturing FPOs	Interactive Discussions by Mr. Raghu / Ms. Raghini	Training hall at the hotel
		13:00 – 14:00	Lunch		
		14:00 – 16:00	Marketing & Value addition by FPOs	Interactive Discussions by	Training hall at the hotel

Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks	
			Mr. N.V Ramana		
	16:00 – 17:00	Panel discussion: FPOs and Agriculture Value Chain Development	Mr. NV Ramana + Mr. Dhananjay + Ms. Raghini. Moderate by Mr.C. S Reddy	Training hall at the hotel	
	17:00 – 18:00	<i>Reflexion session</i>	GIC Ethiopia		
	18:00 – 18:30	<i>Field visit guidelines</i>	Mrs. Rama, APMAS		
	19:00	<i>Dinner</i>			
9	Wed, 22.11.	7:00 – 9:30	Travel from Bangalore to Madanapalle (breakfast on the way)	GIC Ethiopia along with APMAS team	
		9:30 – 10:00	Fresh up & Field visit in Madanapalle (Team will divide into two groups and visit Farmer groups & Farmer Producer Organisations etc in two different areas)	APMAS team	In the field
		10:00 – 10:15	Team – 1: Travel to Kondaiahgaripalli village in Nimmanapalli Mandal		In the field with field team
			Team – 2: Travel to Reddyvaripalli village in Nimmanapalli		

Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks	
	11:30 – 12:45	Team – 1: Interactions with Board members of Kondaiahgaripalli Grama Rythu Sangam (Federation of farmer groups at Village level) in Team – 2: Interactions with Board members of Reddyvaripalli Grama Rythu Sangam (Federation of farmer groups at Village level)	APMAS team	In the field with field team	
	12:45 – 01:00	Team – 1 & 2: Travel to Nimmanapalli		In the field with field team	
	13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch at Nimmanapalli Village</i>	APMAS team	In the field with field team	
	14:00 – 15:00	Team 1 & 2: Visiting to Farmer Development Center run by Nimmanapalli FC	APMAS team	In the field with field team	
	15:00 – 16:15	Team 1 & 2: Interaction with Nimmanapalli FPO Board members	APMAS team	In the field with field team	
	16:15 – 16:30	Travel back to Madanapalle		In the field with field team	
	16:30 – 17:00	<i>Reflexion session</i>	APMAS team	In the field with field team	
	17:00 – 18:00	Travel from Madanapalle to Horsely Hills	APMAS team	In the field	
	18:00 – 18:45	Hotel check-in & fresh up	APMAS team	Overnight stay at Horsley Hills	
	19:00	<i>Dinner</i>	With APMAS team		
10	Thur, 23.11.	8:00 – 8:30	Breakfast		
		8:30 – 9:30	Travel to Madanapally	APMAS team	In the field with field team
		9:30 – 10:30	Visiting to Tomato Mandi (Biggest Market) in Madanapalle	APMAS team	In the field with field team

Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks
	10.30 - 11.00	Travel to field Team 1: Travel to Kurbalkota Team 2: Travel to Valmikipuram	APMAS team	In the field with field team
	11:00 – 13:00	Visiting to FPO working on Natural farming & interactions with the FPO Board members Team 1: Visiting to Mandhyamvarip, Vepalapalli, Kurabalakota villages to visit: FPO interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demo plot • Bio-fermenter • Interactions with APCNF team • Interaction with Kurabalakota Women FPO Board members Team 2: Visiting to Mallireddigaripalli, Burujugadda Kotapalli, Valmikipuram villages to visit FPO interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demo plot, Solar light trap and Solar sprayer • Bio-fermenter • Milking machine • Interactions with APCNF team • Interactions with Valmikipuram FPO Board members 	APMAS team	In the field with field team
	13:00 – 13:30	Team 1 & 2 travel to Chinna Tippa Samudram (CTM)		In the field with field team
	13:30 – 14:30	Lunch at Chinna Tippa Samudram (CTM) Collection centre		In the field with field team
	14:30 – 14:45			

Date	Time	Activity	Facilitator	Remarks	
	14:45 – 16:30	Team 1 & 2: Visiting M-Tomoto Federation (Federation of FPOs) and interact with Board members, particularly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input and Output marketing • Solar Dehydration Unit • Biomass Cold storage unit • Chilli cleaning, grading and packing 	APMAS team	In the field with field team	
	16:30 – 17:00	<i>Reflexion session</i>	GIC Ethiopia	In the field with field team	
	17:00 – 18:00	Travel from Madanapalle to Horsley Hills	With APMAS team	In the field	
	18:00 – 18:45	fresh up	With APMAS team		
	19:00	<i>Dinner</i>	With APMAS team	Overnight stay at Horsley Hills	
11	Fr, 24.11.	8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast		
		9:00 – 12:00	Travel to Bangalore		
		13:00 – 14:00	Lunch at Hotel		La Marvella
		14:00 – 17:00	Reflexion session in Hotel		Conference hall
		19:00	<i>Dinner</i>		
		22:00	Departure to Airport		
12	Sa, 25.	02:20	Return flight to Addis ET 691: 02:20 → 06:25		