



2018-19

Annual Report



**AME FOUNDATION
BELIEVES IN
"HELPING PEOPLE TO HELP THEMSELVES"**

AMEF is a resource organization. It seeks to empower dry land farmers in degraded ecological situations on the Deccan Plateau, in improving their own livelihoods, along with sensitivity to gender and equity concerns. Pursuing this goal, it works with farming communities, like-minded NGOs and government agencies concerned in creating and testing technological options, for wider application. In the process, it strives to forge institutional synergy among the interacting bio mass actors, playing a catalytic and facilitative role.

AMEF is motivated by a deep-going concern. The initial transformation in Indian agriculture became possible through the Green Revolution technology, which benefited the better-endowed regions and resource-rich farmers, using expensive purchased farm inputs. But, it bypassed the vast dry farming tracts. Trapped in these areas are a large number of small and marginal farmers struggling to make a living, with their depleted environmental assets, eroded soils and rapidly sinking ground water resources. Therefore, a second transformation has become necessary. Working with these families, searching for alternative farming options is a matter of great socio-economic and strategic concern, today.

Does AMEF create something out of nothing? Hardly the case. Adopting the Participatory Technology Development (PTD) and Farmer Field Schools (FFS) approaches, AMEF teams up with responsive farmers groups, interested NGOs and development agencies to locally explore new ways of managing the available natural resources more efficiently. In the process, new perceptions are generated, new insights are gained and new approaches are devised, combining the traditional knowledge with scientific findings. Thus, farmers are enabled to progress one step beyond the present.

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AME Foundation – Genesis and Focus

Agriculture sector, the primary source of livelihoods for nearly 67% of the population in India is displaying a sluggish growth. Small holders constitute the farming majority (around 70%). More than 60% of them are rain fed farmers. It is reckoned that in future, bulk of the food needs of the nation has to come from rain fed areas, as the irrigated areas have almost neared their peak, while the scope for further increase of irrigation is negligible.

Today, we are left with depleted farmlands, degraded farm environment and demotivated farm population who have nowhere else to go. Farmlands, under cultivation for generations, are getting depleted of their finer soil fractions, fertility and water holding capacity. Further, the degradation of the farm environment is aggravating the situation. Farming in regions like Deccan Plateau of Southern India with low and uncertain rainfall conditions is increasingly becoming unviable with inappropriate land-use practices and depleted vegetation. Challenges to feed and to fulfill the needs of a growing population in a sustainable way require a better and more comprehensive insight into ecologically sound crop production processes, especially in fragile environments of resource-poor areas of the Deccan Plateau.

While the development programmes focus on a small section of elite, frontline farmers who are able to cope with the changes around them, the majority of small holders who are risk shy have nowhere else to go. AMEF focuses on building capacities of these farming majority to deal with their own situations better.

AME Foundation (AMEF), over the years, with its deep-rooted interest in sustainable agriculture (SA), has been seeking ways to fulfil its mission of empowering the dry land farmers in degraded ecological situations on the Deccan Plateau, in improving their own livelihoods, along with gender and social equity concerns. Born as a training agency in 1982, in a temperate climate in The Netherlands, AME has moved into a tropical region in 1986. Going

beyond the training of agricultural environmentalists, AMEF has entered into field situations to forge innovative farming practices combining the traditional and the modern methods.

Presently, AMEF is working as a development-oriented, non-government organization, devoted to promoting ecological farming alternatives among small and marginal farmers engaged in dry land farming. The twin objectives of AMEF are: improving the livelihoods of the farm families in dry lands and addressing the environmental concerns. The focus, thus, includes improvement and promotion of alternative farming practices to bolster food security, strengthen livelihoods, address environment issues and promote more sustainable agricultural practices. It adopts participatory approaches that recognise local knowledge systems and involves local farmers' groups, community-based organizations (CBOs), non-government organizations (NGOs), government departments and other biomass actors in the development process.

The **focal activities** of the organization are given below:

1. **Generating alternative farming practices:**
Beginning with on-farm crop improvements by means of Farmer Field School (FFS) and Participatory Technology Development (PTD) processes, technologies related to natural resource conservation and utilisation (NRC and NRU) get generated leading to alternative land use practices. This, in turn, helps to conserve and develop the farm resources and rebuild the environmental support to farming. In the process, the farmers' innovating capacities get enhanced.
2. **Forging gender equity social processes:**
AMEF seeks to mitigate and ameliorate the inequality based on gender, caste and economic status. Thus, AMEF addresses these issues while planning and implementing its activities.

3. **Capacity building of farming groups through experiential learning methods:**

AMEF has a firm conviction and believes that farming is what a farmer does. Therefore, if durable changes in farming are intended, it is necessary that, the farmers' perception is widened, insights deepened, attitudes modified and managerial abilities are upgraded. Therefore **human resource development** is the key. AMEF specializes in participatory and empowering education processes like Farmer Field Schools to guide farming communities.

4. **Focus on building capacities of Rural Youth as Sustainable Agriculture Promoters:**

For the large and still growing rural population, agriculture still remains a major means of livelihood. For sustainable rural development, building the capacities of the rural youth to gainfully practice farming as well as guide their own farming communities is crucial. It enables **rural youth** to gain confidence in handling their resources better, get better returns as well as help them to get better social recognition which is so necessary for them to remain in villages.

5. **Building NGO network:** For scaling up of eco-friendly initiatives, AMEF interacts and strengthens the NGO networks involved in the land-based activities. By using training situations created in the cluster villages, capacity building of partner NGOs forms the major portion of AMEF's work.

6. **Developing institutional linkages:** AMEF seeks to build linkages with state, national, international research and development organizations to harness the technologies and methodologies for accessing information and involve such agencies to move towards participatory research and development approaches.

7. **Information sharing strategies:**

Documentation and dissemination on technology and methodology of ecological agriculture form an important responsibility of AMEF. It brings out manuals, guidelines, workshop proceedings, working papers, case studies etc.

8. **LEISA India publication:** AMEF intends to develop LEISA as a preferred platform for promoting eco-farming alternatives and reach more persons and institutions interested in sustainable agriculture. AMEF also works on enhancing the capacities of NGOs and others in documenting and disseminating experiences on sustainable agriculture.

In attaining the twin objectives of improving livelihoods and addressing environmental concerns, AMEF builds its operational strategies based on the fact that the farmer is the primary user of the land resources. Therefore, AMEF begins working with the farm families, farm resources and farming systems. A start is made in village clusters with groups of farmers, using LEISA technologies. This is used as a springboard for scaling up LEISA practices and as a training base for development agencies and practicing farmers.

So far, AMEF had been using combination of methodologies in implementing the focal activities. Empowering learning processes like Farmer Field Schools and Participatory Technology Development are used. While the primary objective remains promoting SA in the dry lands of Deccan Plateau, AMEF is making earnest efforts to address the issue of natural resource management in some pockets of rainfed and irrigated rice areas through the "System of Crop Intensification" principles in paddy, ragi and red gram. On a modest scale, AMEF has been promoting revival of farmer preferred local varieties and promotion of home gardens with urban citizens.

AREAS OF OPERATION

AMEF Foundation continued its field operations with Area Units located in Dharwad and Dharmapuri and field programmes implemented in Chintamani of Kolar district, and in Telangana.

THE PROGRAMMES

The major projects implemented included

Dharmapuri Water Initiative (DWI) program supported by Srivatsram

Improving dry farmer livelihoods through
Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture
(Telangana Farm Initiative) – *supported by
Srivatsram*

Improving small farmer livelihoods in rain fed
areas through climate resilient farming
practices – *supported by Supraja Foundation*

LEISA India programme – *supported by
MISEREOR.& SWED Bio*

Dharmapuri Water Initiative (DWI)

This project, Dharmapuri Water Initiative (DWI) is a pilot project of AMEF supported by Sri Srivats Ram, MD of Wheels India Ltd. The pilot programme focused on improving water conservation structures in a select village where the core programme of Supraja Foundation was operational.



Trenches with bunds making by a farm family Mr. Mathu and Muniyammal

AMEF Dharmapuri team participated in SRFI review meet at Chennai on 27th July 2018. They presented the progress of DFI activities (2017-18), Srivatsram was impressed with higher income obtained by DFI farmers through diversified cropping system and poultry (2017-18), who suggested other NGO partners to emulate the approaches. New project preparatory activities for the year 2018-19 were presented as these had to be done before the season begins.



During the preliminary months, the focus was on concluding activities of the Srivatsam supported programme involving 100 farmers in 5 villages in Pennagaram Block for the year 2017-18. As the

fields had reasonable residual moisture, the second crop of horsegram and intercrop Redgram was taken up. Owing to LEISA practices, the horse gram yields were 300 - 350kgs/ac in LEISA plot, while it was 250-280kgs in farmer's own plot. The husk amounting to 100kgs and dried plants served as cattle feed. In case of red gram sown as intercrop, the grain yield was around 60-75kgs/ac and the husk amounting to 20kgs used as cattle feed. Also, the farmers in the project area continued household cultivation of fodder species (Co4CN, sweet sudan, CoFs29 C) which provided them supplementary green fodder throughout the year. Farmers kept a portion of Horse gram and Red gram produce for household consumption and sold the rest in market. The program also worked with 100 women farmers who took up backyard poultry of local varieties and household kitchen gardens. While they had better access for household consumption of diversified vegetables, they also mentioned about additional income from sale of vegetables. They have preserved seeds for the next season and shared some amounts with relatives and friends. The Poultry activity got stabilized with 100 farmers which helped them to get eggs and meat with access to nutritious food as well as additional income.

For the year 2018-19, Srivatsram was keen on providing a limited support to water conservation initiatives on a pilot bases in a select village. Based on field visit and reviews, a project proposal was submitted on Dharmapuri Water Initiatives (DWI) involving promotion of soil and water conservation measures like formation of trenches, bunds and farm ponds, in a select village with few households. Also, household rainwater harvesting structures were proposed to be undertaken to meet the drinking water needs. These activities were complementary to the core programme activities of the Supraja Foundation supported program.

A beginning was made after the onset of rain during May and June. Under DWI, moisture conservation and water harvesting initiatives were taken up in K.Puthur village covering 40 acres of dry lands owned by 40 farm families. It started with summer ploughing to harvest summer rain in May and continued with creating field trenches along with bunds and farm ponds. All the 40 families have completed field trenches and bunds in their dry lands of one acre each and a total of 40 acres. They have dug 14 trenches of 6ftX2ftX1ft dimension along with bunds in each of their land area. Each farm family got directly involved in putting 12 human days to complete this work. Out of 20 farm ponds, 10 farm ponds were completed; each farm pond is 10ftX10ftX5ft size with stone pitching work all along the sides. On receipt of one rain, a farmer namely Mathu, could harvest 200 litres of rain water and 150 Kgs of eroded top soil from his farm pond.

The village K.Puthur has acute water scarcity. Besides field trenches and farm ponds, domestic rain water harvesting was initiated at Farmer's household level. The rain water harvesting systems were installed with 20 households in the months of September-October. Each system contained 1000 litres storage tank, pipe fittings all along the roof to collect the water. Each family have rendered their contribution in terms of labour support. There was only one rain received after the installation which enabled around 20000 litres of water harvested.

Mr. Krishnan presented the progress of the Dharmapuri Water Initiative on the 19th November 2018 to Srivatsram at Chennai. Based on the project proposal and budget allotted, the field level farm ponds, bunds and trenches, rain water harvesting structures for domestic water saving and use was completed and the results have been positive and the progress, well appreciated by the donor.

Improving dry land farmers livelihood through promotion of Sustainable Agriculture

Telangana Farm Initiative (TFI) supported by Srivatsram promoted ecological agriculture in 5 villages of Kondurg Mandal of Mahaboobnagar district of Telangana State during 2018-19.

In the preliminary months, the SRI farmer's harvest data was collected. These were the farmers who were trained in practicing System of Rice Intensification (SRI), during 2017-18, in the 3 project villages. They got an average yield of 23.5 quintals/acre compared to 20.5 quintals in non-SRI paddy methods. Also, in these months, a study tour was organized where a group of 20 farmers were taken on a field visit to State Agriculture University in Hyderabad where they participated in the Seed mela.

In this project, during the year 2018-19, the farmers have been guided to grow dry land crops through adoption of LEISA practices. They cultivate red gram as main crop, green gram and black gram as intercrops. The project has been implemented in 5 villages namely Ganganaguda, Yedira, Kaslabad, Mustripally and Venkriyal in Kondargu Mandal, Mahaboobnagar District. Under the project, 2 FFS were initiated in Kaslabad and Ganganaguda villages while Modular trainings were conducted in 3 villages.

Two FFS events were organized involving 50 farmers in two villages. FFS was done in Redgram crop with intercrop of Maize, Green gram, Cowpea and border crop of Jowar. The village wise composition of men and women farmers is as follows. In Kaslabad, (19 men and 6 women farmers) and in Ganganaguda, (20 men & 5 Women) participated in the redgram based cropping systems. The training topics included water management, composting, vermi composting, enriched Farm Yard Manure (EFYM), Azolla, Nipping, Mulching and Green manure, pest management, and marketing. The intercrops planned were maize, cowpea and Greengram. Owing to failure of monsoon, the intercrops totally failed, while the main crop yields came down. The yield of redgram in Kaslabad was around 4.5 q/acre in FFS plot, while it was 3.5 q/acre, while in Ganganguda, it was 4 q/acre in FFS plots and 3.2 q/acre in control plots.

Besides FFS, modular training events were initiated in the other 3 villages, (2 modules/village) namely, Yadira, Mustipally and Venkriyal covering 150 farmers. The broad areas covered were: Mixed cropping systems, Pest and disease management, Water conservation, Azolla cultivation, Vermi-composting and composting, bud nipping and Mulching. The specific topics included, soil and water conservation, seeds selection and treatment with trichoderma and rhizobium (adopted by 360 farmers), improved ploughing and sowing methods (adopted by around 500 farmers), intercropping (adopted by around 430 farmers).

Thirty kitchen gardens were established at household level. Vegetables grown were, Palak, Lady finger, Brinjal, Tomato, Coriander leaves, Cluster beans, Bitter gourd, Radish, Ridge gourd and Chillies. Farming families consumed these vegetables for their household consumption and saved around 500-1000 rupees on purchase of vegetables.

Ten Azolla pits were completed. By feeding azolla to the cattle, farmers got marginally better milk yields and incomes.

Community biological preparations were taken up in Kaslabad village. Preparation of Jeevamrutha and Panchagavya production was up twice in a month.

Motivated by the AMEF staff leadership in the area, the women groups keenly started an additional farm related enterprise. Through project sanction for starting a dal mill, one group in Kaslabad village took interest, provided the space for installing Red gram processing mill. These women groups shared the costs. Along with AMEF team, farmer representatives visited the potential suppliers in Akola. During assessment, staff from YRA (AMEF- LEISA India programme partner), operating the processing mills for more than a decade, assisted. The mill was installed in the site area provided by Ms. Aruna w/o Mr.Mogil Reddy, a farmer and a group member. The women groups contributed one third amount as co-finance. The Dal Mill, including transport to reach the village costed around

Rs.90000. The project funds supported the investment as the donor was keen for enterprise development. The farmer's contribution was used for maintenance of the mill.



During January – April 2019 the mill has processed 3.5 tonnes of Redgram of 80 farmers charging a nominal fee of Rs 3/kg, while it costs Rs 5 normally, when done with private enterprises. Thus, the group has got an income of Rs 10,500 by doing processing themselves. Also, they sold the 600 kgs of husk at Rs 7/kg and got an additional income of Rs 7200 to the group's account. The income was deposited in the group account. Arundhati Mahila Sangha, which is maintaining the mini dal mill has extended its services to farmers from neighboring villages. The initiative has been highly appreciated by Srivatsram, the Donor..

Forty SRI nursery beds were established, and ten day old seedlings were transported. Thirty farmers have taken up irrigated SRI method of Paddy cultivation, as per the proposed project. Trained by AMEF, they made comparisons between SRI and non SRI plots. On an average, there were 38-55 tillers (average 46) in SRI plot, while it was around 12 tillers in non SRI plot and the grain count in SRI plots was also higher. Cono weeder was brought for inter cultivation in SRI plots in Ganganaguda village. Farmers shared the equipment and the costs. The crop is to be harvested in the month of May 2019.

The AAO of the Mandal distributed 50 kgs bag of Neem cake to 25 farmers free of cost in which 15 farmers were from the FFS group. This encouraged the farmers to adopt bio-inputs in the control of diseases and pests. Two farmers in Yedira and Mustripalli villages have continued production of bio-inputs, used them in SRI paddy cultivation as well as shared them with 10 farmers in the respective villages. In Khaslabad village, one woman SHG prepared these bio-inputs and shared with 15 farmers for SRI Paddy cultivation during the season.

Twenty eight farmers from 5 villages visited a progressive farmer's field in Gimmikunta village who is growing diverse crops, producing and using only bio-inputs like Panchagavya and Jeevamrutha for cultivation of cereal and pulse crops.

Mr. Malla Reddy presented the progress of the Telangana programme on the 19th November 2018 at Chennai to Srivatsram. The progress made was well appreciated.

Preparatory activities for the next season included the following operations. Training events were conducted in the 5 project villages on the importance of summer ploughing, the importance of soil and moisture conservation measures were explained to nearly 300 farmers. Twenty five farmers in 5 villages have saved Redgram seeds at household level for the next Kharif season.

Improving small farmer livelihoods in rainfed areas through climate resilient farming practices

A programme on climate resilient practices, supported by Supraja Foundation was initiated in three districts in South Indian States – Chintamani and Dharwad in Karnataka, and Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu. The programme was initiated with an overall goal of improving dry farming livelihoods through better natural resource management, mixed cropping practices towards resilient sustainable farming systems.



The project aims at promoting resilient sustainable farming systems through better natural resources management and enhanced crop biodiversity. The focus would be on improved farm incomes through diversity and reduced costs of cultivation; guiding farming communities through empowering educational processes like Farmers Field Schools; organizing farmer collectives for sharing resources, facilities as well as creation of new enterprises.

Specific Project Goals are:

- Improving productivity in dry land crops of millets/cereals/pulses for improved yields and farm incomes through diversity and reduced costs of cultivation.
- Guiding farming communities through empowering farmer education processes like Farmer Field Schools
- Organizing farmer collectives to manage their own seed and fodder requirements, share resources like equipment, explore joint initiatives for processing and value addition.

Summarized Objective/Work plan:

- Preparatory activities: (Year 1) Identification of villages; Conducting Gramsabhas/PRAs; Organising eco farmer groups; Preparing local trainers; Conducting motivational study tours
- Educational Activities (Capacity building): (Year 1,2,3) Organising participatory empowering learning events like Farmer Field Schools and other specific need based training events; Field guidance for adoption to experience benefits of alternatives; Sharing learnings, data analysis

- Field level implementation: (Year 1,2,3): Field guidance for adoption to experience benefits of alternatives; Sharing learnings, data collection and analysis
- Institutionalising activities for self-management: (Year 2 and 3) Organising farmer groups into collectives; collective input management – seed, fodder, biological; Joint initiatives for sharing resources, processing and local marketing.

The project has proposed to implement climate resilient agricultural practices in 60 villages, 20 each from 3 regions of Dharwad and Kolar Districts in Karnataka State and Dharmapuri District in Tamil Nadu.

Based on the project sanction during December 2017, the yearly planned activities were initiated. The preparatory activities carried out were: Conducting Gramasabhas and PRAs; forming Eco Farmers Groups; preparing communities through Training of Trainers (ToTs) in all the three areas; conducting season long Farmer Field Schools and need based Modular training events; Carrying out yield measurements; organizing Field days spectacularly to ensure momentum and scaling up through **farmer-centric** and **farmer-managed** processes; periodic quarterly reviews; strengthening formation of Eco Farmer Groups in the new villages; strengthening towards collectivization efforts by groups; promoting farm supportive supplementary income generation activities like kitchen gardens, back yard poultry.

Internal review meetings were conducted with the Area Units during April 17-19, 2018 at Bangalore. The teams reviewed the progress, discussed the curriculum for TOTs and other planned activities, prepared for the review meeting by Supraja Directors. Executive Director, based on the organizational learnings, guided in establishing protocols and templates for work plans, reporting formats, and baseline data formats with the assistance of T M Radha.

A one day review meeting with the AMEF team was done by the Supraja Directors. Dr. Srinivasan, Dr. Venkatesh Tagat and Shri Laxminarayana attended on behalf of Supraja Foundation. The review was presented by the whole team with Team Leaders taking lead from each area. They were supported by Mr. Srinath and on AMEF's approaches by Ms. T. M. Radha. The review team appreciated the progress and complemented the efforts. *While AMEF's core competencies were recognized, it was suggested to hasten the process of collectivization and institutionalization efforts at the farmers level from the first year of the programme itself.* AMEF team undertook study tours to organizations with similar mandates to understand the features, advantages and challenges of the process.

Study Tours

AME staff undertook visit to two Farmer Producers Organisations in Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu promoted by Hand In Hand, an NGO to understand the structure and operations in collectivizing the produces and marketing. The interesting part of the study was that the approach of starting the organic farmers groups in the village through a watershed programme, registering the federation at the District level as a society and later registering under the company act thus facilitating the farmers to gain additional income through collective bargaining. The additional income generating activities of the FPO in enhancing the group income was interesting.

Similarly, to gain a different experience, AME staff have visited Timbaktu Collective near Penukonda in Andhra Pradesh during July 2018. The evolution of organic farmers groups and establishment of Dharani Fam Coop Limited, an FPO and its operations were shared in detail by the CEO. The interesting part of the study is that the Timbaktu itself is marketing the organic produces and value added products through an outlet and also in the urban markets through contacts/agents. The rates offered to the farmers are higher than the market price thus helping the farmers to get more income than the local market.

Besides Gramsabhas and PRAs, the focus was on forming eco farmer groups who would undergo capacity building activities like FFS. Preparatory activities for FFS for the crop season of June – September were initiated in all the three areas focusing on Soyabean and Maize based cropping systems in Dharwad; Finger millet and Groundnut based cropping systems in Dharmapuri; Finger millet and Groundnut based cropping systems in Kolar.

Training of Trainers

The training of trainers took precedence as this activity is critical in each area to prepare groups in 10 villages to conduct Farmers Field Schools during the Kharif season. Each Area Unit spent considerable time in the preparation for conducting the ToT in which selection of the interested farmers was most important. The criteria for the selection were shared with the farmer groups. The criteria included an interested and progressive thinking farmer (man or woman), willing to learn ecological farming practices, experiment new techniques and technologies learnt in the FFS and sharing learning and field experiences with the other farmers to influence wider-spread of good practices. The other most important criterion was that the participant had to attend all the FFS sessions without fail. The 4-5 day TOT in each area focused on participatory situational analysis processes like PRAs, baseline surveys, agro eco system analysis, facilitation of FFS, and collectivization efforts. Local officials were invited. They were appraised of the purpose of AMEF's initiatives. Later, potential Sustainable Agriculture Promoters were identified to strengthen the programme implementation in clusters of villages.

The best performing four farmers in terms of increased knowledge, good communication and mobilization skills and willing to contribute for the programme were selected through an objective assessment process conducted at Area Unit and Central Unit levels. They were identified as Sustainable Agriculture Promoters (SAPs) to strengthen the programme.

Sustainable Agriculture Promoters (SAPs) are those trained farmers by AME in the community who have shown interest in learning ecological agriculture through LEISA practices and have social commitment in helping the fellow farmers in its adoption. They seem to have inclination to actively promote collectivization efforts. Based on the performance of the farmers in the ToT, an objective assessment was carried out to all the participant farmers. Each SAP was to coordinate field activities in a cluster of 5 villages.

Eco Farmers Groups

Eco Farmers Groups are the group of farmers interested in practicing eco-alternatives through learning, adoption and spread. As per the proposal, initially, in each village, two FFS groups of farmers (around 40 in two groups), one group getting trained through need based Modular trainings (around 30) were formed and a TOT was initiated. As institutionalization was fast tracked in the year 1 itself on suggestion by the donor, the strategy was revised. Based on experience, to enable a critical mass of trained 100 farmers in each village, more eco farmer groups were formed. Thus, in each village, to enable 100 farmers in each village, a cluster of five villages having 500 farmers and 4 such clusters potentially having 2000 farmers as members in each area for a future FPO was conceived. Thus, in all the areas, more groups were organized (5 instead of three in each village).

AMEF conducts training events for these 5 groups. Two undergo FFS and 3 groups undergo Modular Trainings (MT). In total, 100 farmers are trained in each village. These clusters of eco farmer groups would gradually evolve into farmer managed institutions handling different activities at different levels. Besides, alternative ecological practices, through experiential learning processes, they are guided to learn about benefits of collectivization to organize themselves to gradually evolve as farmer managed institutions.

Farmers Field School

During the cropping season, 30 Farmers Field Schools (FFSs) have been proposed, 10 in each area. One FFS in the village has 20 members who are interested in learning new techniques in ecological agriculture and are willing to adopt the practices in one major crop of the region. Soyabean crop and Maize in rabi were selected for the FFS in the Dharwad region while it is Finger millet in Dharmapuri region. Kolar will have Finger millet and Groundnut for FFS. These 20 farmers are organized to meet every week on a collaborator plot and experientially learn in groups throughout the crop season.

The preparations included: Orientating the members on the tasks and expected learning; Purchase of inputs for trial plots (seeds, bio-inputs such as *Trichoderma viride*, *Pseudomonas* and *Azospirillum*); Purchase of glass/plastic wares for the sessions and kits; Selection of a collaborator farmer on whose plot the alternatives are learnt through FFS and compared with their own practice as 'control plot'. Some of the details of the FFS process were taken up in the following villages.

Area	Villages
Dharwad	G.Basavanakoppa, Halligeri, Holtikote, Devarahuballi, Devagiri, Ramapur, Giriyal, Anchatageri, Rayanal, Parasapur
Dharmapuri	Tholur, Sinnampalli, K.Puthur, Madam, Kopulur, Kalapampadi, Muthukampatti, Alleypuram, Poocharampatti, RR Alli.
Kolar	Yerraihgarahalli, V. Kote, Musturupatna, Yenigadale, Salamakalahalli, Guttapalya, Guntturgadda, Gownicheruvupalli, Narasapura, K.Raguttahalli, Thammepalli

During July to September months being the peak crop season, the sessions had detailed field studies on crop growth measurement such as plant height, number of branches, number of pods and number of grains/seeds as observed by the groups in both the experimental and farmers' plots. The readings were recorded in the field record sheets and shared with the group members. The observation of diseases and pests were also made in the Agro Eco System Analysis (AESAs) to distinguish between pests and predators. The remedial measures for controlling the pests were discussed and measures taken using biological agents.

Integrating business principles into FFS

During this period, as a unique intervention, AMEF Team experimented a modified FFS curriculum to integrate business principles and understanding into the experiential learning processes. AMEF firmly believes that to be farmer led, the processes should be based on empowering communities first on the purpose and guide them to evolve their own models rather than thrusting models on them. The modules of business integration developed by (TM Radha, Krishnan and Prasad) were tried out in the sessions. These included crop production, its economics, market avenues and benefits of collectivisation. These experiential learning processes helped in enhancing farmer's perceptions of collectivization of produce and economic benefits of collective marketing. Group exercises included games to help farmers understand the benefits of pooling resources and bulk marketing. Where the integration was missed in FFS curricula as they were ongoing in some areas, the farmer groups were guided on these principles in Modular training events which is other training method adopted by AMEF to guide farmers.

Modular Trainings

Modular training to 60 farmers (3 Eco Farmers Groups) in each of the 30 villages were conducted in which crop management was dealt in a one-day session along with the visit to FFS plots. The new techniques and technologies in agriculture such as cycle weeder, biological control of pests using Neem Seed Kernel Extracts and identification of pests and predators through AESA exercises. Farmers learnt observation of symptoms of diseases through field exercises. Farmers also understood the techniques and benefits of vermicomposting and Azolla cultivation and advantages of bio-control solutions.

Modular Sessions conducted in the three regions were on the following cropping systems.

Dharwad : Soyabean and Maize

Kolar : Groundnut and Finger millet

Dharmapuri : Finger millet with intercrop of Redgram and Groundnut

The following table shows the details of Modular Training conducted:

Area	Crop	Topics covered
Dharwad	Soyabean	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Soil and water conservation 2. Seed Selection, Seed treatment with biofertilizers 3. Soil Nutrient management 4. Weed management 5. Integrated Pest and Disease management 6. Post-harvest marketing

		7. Kitchen Gardening
Kolar	Groundnut	1. Seed treatment and sowing method 2. Backyard poultry, urea plus cow urine extract 3. Enriched FYM preparation 4. Kitchen Garden 5. Rabbit rearing
Dharmapuri	Ragi	1. Soil and water conservation, soil erosion and preventing measures, soil testing 2. Soil nutrient management, enrichment of FYM 3. Crops and cropping system-Intercropping, border cropping, trap cropping, sowing pattern, 4. Experimental plot designing 5. Seed treatment, germination test, 6. Agro Eco System Analysis 7. Leaf cutting experiments 8. Yellow sticky traps preparation and installation. Panchagavya preparation 9. Homestead Sericulture

Farmers Field Days

At the end of cropping season in the project villages, farmers exchanged their experiences and learnings of the five months of season long FFS with other farmers. The Field day coincided with the final harvesting stage where the farmers could see the results and compare with the normal plots. This helped them see and believe the benefits of ecological agriculture approaches both in terms of quantity and quality of the produce.

The Field Days conducted by the Area Units:

Area	Village	No. of farmers	Sharing of experiences
Dharwad	1. Devara Hubballi 2. Rayanal	450 250	Seed treatment; reduced pest and disease in crops; Weed management by using cycle weeder (cost of labor minimized); Inter crop with main crop got additional income, border crop reduced pest and disease intensity, controlled moisture loss, positive result of botanicals i.e NSKE and Panchagavya, Learning through FFS process, group savings, exhibition of charts, models what they learnt in the field during FFS; Mixed cropping systems; Border trap crops; Use of biological control measures; Vermi-composting ;Azolla cultivation
Kolar	1. Musturpatna 2. Gunturgadda	60 50	FFS process ; Preparation of Jeevamrutha and Panchagavya; Rabbit rearing; Use of Waste Decomposer; Seed treatment benefits; Soil moisture conservation methods; Multi-cropping system; Bio-control agents and its benefits; Vermi-composting techniques
Dharmapuri	1. Poochrampatti	100	Soil and water conservation structures and its advantages observed; Seed treatment and seed selection processes; Identification of friendly and enemy pests and solutions; Crop quality observations

Collective initiatives in different areas

In K. Pudur village in Dharmapuri region, 40 farmers took up soil and water conservation structures such as field trenches, bunds and farm ponds supported by Srivatsram, Chennai. In a micro-watershed area, these 200 trenches and 40 farm ponds have supplemented soil moisture during the stress period when there was a gap in monsoon for nearly two months. The farmers came forward to take up the structures by seeing its immediate benefits. They too have contributed their labour by working for 15-20 days in their own field.

Two groups in Dharmapuri region prepared biological agents like *Panchagavya* for sharing with the farmers, who are members in the group.

In order to initiate collectivization efforts, sharing equipment like weeder, tractor, sprayer etc, and collective purchase of inputs was undertaken. Availing subsidy from Agri department, bio inputs of Rhizobium, Phosphobacteria, Trichoderma viride, Azospirillum etc. were collectively purchased for 200 farmers from Department of Agriculture. Owing to these collective efforts, they saved expenses on transport and inputs. They spent around Rs. 600 on transport instead of otherwise spending Rs. 5000 (for 200 farmers @ Rs.25/head) thus saving, Rs. 4400.00.

The farmer group decided to raise a community nursery. They established it in an area of 700 square meters in K.Puthur village. In this nursery, biomass nurseries of Acacia sps, nurseries of tomato, chillies, greens, brinjal, mulberry cuttings were raised. Besides nurseries, they prepared bio pesticides like panchagavya. To begin with, they sold 10 litres at a subsidized rate of Rs.25/- per litre. Generally, the Private firms sell it for Rs.125/lit. Necessary linkages have been forged with Department of Forests. The forest officials have agreed to supply seedlings of multiple varieties for easy distribution to the farmers.

In Dharwad region, 100 farmers in 5 villages farmer groups took up establishment of a Community Resource Centre in Devarahuballi village, supported by ARCADIS, an MNC as part of their CSR programme. Critical inputs in farming such as motor operated spray pumps, cycle weeders were made available in the Resource Centre, managed by a group.

Activities organized at Central Unit (Bangalore)

The Central Unit of AME has been supporting the regional Teams during the quarterly meetings to strategize and implement planned activities

An internal quarterly staff review meeting was organized between 17-19th July 2018, Bangalore. The purpose of the review and planning meeting was Reflection, Appreciation, Learning and Suggestions for improvement.

The Day 1 was devoted to review, Day 2 for reflective discussions leading to Team learning on a need based topic and Day 3 for finalizing plans. Enough time was devoted for each team for enthusiastic and purposeful discussions to highlight the progress made, the challenges faced and tackled, key learnings and few interesting stories.

The special topic brainstorming session was on visioning self-managed farmer institutions. Each staff member's vision was presented. As a follow up, the steps which could be implemented in AMEF's road map for farmer led institutionalization processes were formulated. The brainstorming session enabled free flow of ideas and strategies which led to staff led consolidation of strategies, collective and shared decision making and time bound action plans. Based on previous experiences as well as AMEF's strengths, the teams guided by TM Radha worked out models of clustering and developing institutional models in AMEF within the project supported framework. Subsequently, ED along with TM Radha and Krishnan worked out the pedagogy for integrating learning modules for institutionalization.

The three day internal learning event, facilitated by ED enabled individual as well as collective reflections, clarity for way forward in AMEF to foster institutionalization, quickly as well as soundly. To

strengthen documentation processes for internal learning and wider sharing, Mr. Srinath has agreed to assist the area teams to prepare farmer cases.

Again, a one day critical meeting was organized with Area Team Leaders on October 24th to guide on the Financial Systems and Protocols to be managed in FCRA projects. Internal auditor along with ED shared commonly acceptable norms and protocols to be followed in the project.

The AMEF has reprinted Farmer Diary in local languages to be used and maintained by the farmers voluntarily.

After designing a baseline survey, a ACCESS database was designed internally to enable capture of the farmers activity data.

Also a group member's Pass Book to enable the groups to maintain the financial details was distributed.

Other regular activities include conducting monthly staff meetings in Area Units and Central Unit as per the fixed dates/days for each month; Quarterly review and planning meetings at CU; and, initiating Centralised data updating, financial utilization, cash flow to AUs, monthly expenditure statements and quarterly reports and financial utilization statements.

The progress of the programme, the unique approaches and systems being conceived and operationalised were shared with Dr. Venkatesh Tagat who visited AMEF. Dr.Tagat also discussed about the possibility of a new proposal by AMEF on supporting a knowledge base creation and maintenance on climate resilient agriculture.

International visitors to Project areas



Senior management people from a multi-national organization (3M), as part of their own 15 day programme of orientation to different sectors, chose AME Foundation. We were shortlisted by them based on several interactions and study of our documents and website after a three month long process. 3M team visited the project villages in Dharmapuri twice and were very impressed with their interaction with the farmers. They termed the visit as a deep learning and memorable experience. They went through our activities, presented their perceptions on how farmers could get more incomes. They were very impressed with FFS process. All the expenses of their visit, field visit including hosting by their local partner was funded from their own funds while AME offered our premises for their study as well as organized field visits. They appreciated the work being done and termed it as a '*life changing experience*'.

Participation in National Conference

Mr Krishnan and Mr Mallikarjun Patil, Team Leaders in Dharmapuri and Dharwad Area Units respectively have participated in a National Conference on “Farmers’ Friendly Soil and Water Conservation Technologies For Mitigating Climate Change Impact” organised by the Soil Conservation Society of India, Tamil Nadu, 31.01.2019 to 02.02.2019. Mr Krishnan presented a paper on ‘*In-situ Soil, Water and Crop Management in dry land eco-system’ guided through FFS*.

Co-finance activities 2018-19

As proposed, AMEF has successfully enthused support to programme villages through KSteps in Kolar, Srivatsram in Dharmapuri and ARCADIS in Dharwad. Specifically, these donors have agreed to support promotion of Water conservation structures in one village on a pilot basis (Dharmapuri), proposed farmer to farmer sharing in (Dharwad) and promoting vermicomposting and homestead poultry (Chintamani), respectively.

Chintamani farmer Meet supported by KStePs



Donor visits: Donor representatives from Supraja Foundation visited all the three areas, reviewed the progress, were impressed with the efforts. However, enthused the teams to achieve excellence so as to be recognized at a National level as a viable alternative model to be emulated on a larger scale. The details are presented under each area.



SUPRAJA-Dharmapuri Area Unit

ToT in Dharmapuri Area

Majority of the participants were women (16 out of 20). The training hall was provided by a trainee farmer close to the agri-fields. The venue of the training was so appropriate for conducting field demonstrations and experiments.

The **knowledge of the participants was assessed** in the beginning and at the end through the Ballot Box exercises. Significant understanding of the topics covered in the training and games/exercises conducted reflected in the enhanced knowledge. Some of the field demonstrations such as soil and water conservation measures, identification of friendly and harmful insects, water and soil moisture infiltration tests were explained through group exercises. The participants were divided into 4 groups. They learnt together as well as handled tasks for making arrangements for the training programme. The groups did several group learning exercises.

FFS was initiated in 10 villages with 2 groups in each village, covering 200 farmers. The FFS sessions primarily focused on soil and water conservation practices, soil fertility management, crops and crop combinations including inter, border, and trap crops. Other aspects included in the sessions were: quality seed selection, seed germination test etc. About 200 farmers have adopted the following crop combinations in Groundnut cropping system with castor as trap crop, cholam as border crop, redgram and cowpea as intercrops to enable ecological pest control, access to diverse produce as well as for leveraging soil nutrients uptake from different soil depths.

Simultaneously, Modular Trainings were conducted in these 10 villages with 3 groups per village (30 EFGs), with a total of 600 farmers. These farmers were also guided on major topics covered in FFS. During the first quarter, 14 sessions in FFS were completed with the last 4 sessions focusing on business integration principles. While the season long FFS covered sowing, seedling, vegetative, reproductive and harvest stages as well as collectivization principles.

However, the production output of dry land crops suffered owing to deficit monsoon (59% (NE monsoon in Dharmapuri, reported by Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai) during the critical crop growth phases. There was only one scanty rain during sowing and later another during their reproductive stage. This affected the second crop sowing i.e. Horse gram due to less residual moisture after the harvest of groundnut. However, LEISA approaches helped AMEF guided farmers to harvest the yield moderately. By adequate moisture assessments, having sown second crop of horse gram, these farmers also could harvest moderate horse gram yields too.

Out of 10 villages, individual farmer's FFS plot's crop yields were collected and averages worked out. Farmers got moderate yields of 3.6 quintals per acre compared to 2.5 quintals in farmers' plots, about 29% higher yield in Groundnut. The Farm Yard Manure applied in the FFS plots reduced the moisture stress. Intercrops of Lab lab, Redgram and Castor minimized the pest attacks. They also gave additional produce which was absent in the farmers regular plots. The analysis with regard to other crops such as Little millet, Finger millet and Horse gram with sorghum as border crop showed higher yields due to ecological farming practices followed. Little millet yielded 300kgs/acre (23% higher) in FFS plot compared to 230 kgs in non-FFS plots. Similarly, Finger millet yielded 200kgs/acre and Horse gram 105 kgs/acre against 170kgs and 85 kgs, respectively, in farmer's regular plots.

Groundnut Cropping system									Sole crops with sorghum as boarder				Second crop	
Groundnut (main crop)		Avarai (intercrop)		Caster (trap crop)		Redgram (intercrop)		Sorghum (Barrier crop)	Little millet (Samai)		Finger millet (Ragi)		Horse gram	
FF S	Control plot.	FF S	Control plot.	FF S	Control plot.	FF S	Control plot.		FF S	Control plot.	FF S	Control plot.	FFS	Control plot.
360	255	15	Not done	27	Not done	43	30		300	230	200	170	105	85

In order to initiate collectivization efforts, sharing equipment like weeder, tractor, sprayer etc, and collective purchase of inputs was undertaken. Availing subsidy from Agri department, bio inputs of Rhizobium, Phosphobacteria, Trichoderma viride, Azospirillum etc..were collectively purchased for 200 farmers from Department of Agriculture. Owing to these collective efforts, they saved expenses on transport and inputs. They spent around Rs. 600 on transport instead of otherwise spending Rs. 5000 (for 200 farmers @ Rs.25/head) thus saving, Rs. 4400.00.

The farmer group decided to raise a community nursery. They established it in an area of 700 square meters in K.Puthur village. In this nursery, biomass nurseries of Acacia sps, nurseries of tomato, chillies, greens, brinjal, mulberry cuttings were raised. Besides nurseries, they prepared bio pesticides like panchagavya. To begin with, they sold 10 litres at a subsidized rate of Rs.25/- per litre. Generally, the Private firms sell it for Rs.125/lit.

Community nursery is being planned as a hub to include all products and services like VAM, bio-pesticides, Azolla, and nurseries. Necessary linkages have been forged with Department of Forests. The forest officials have agreed to supply seedlings of multiple varieties for easy distribution to the farmers.

Donor review and study visit by Supraja Partner



It was significant that IDF, a Supraja Partner visited the project area to learn about how AMEF is implementing the programme. It was combined with a review meeting by the donor representatives. Specifically, the purpose of the IDF visit was to learn how the systematic FFS was being conducted, how AME Foundation is able to deliver at costs much below other partners in terms of HRD support. A team of officials from SUPRAJA Foundation (Dr. Venkatesh Tagat, Shri Laxminarayana) and IDF (Shri. Srikantha Shenoy, Executive Trustee along with staff members) visited AME Foundation, Dharmapuri on 26th July 2018. The team first visited the villages, K.Puthur followed by Poocharampatti in Pennagaram block located 40km away from Dharmapuri town. Visitors observed leaf compensation studies, multi color sticky traps, discussed logistical arrangements, the frequency of FFS, the mixed cropping systems, use of bio inputs, savings habits, how the community nursery is being maintained. The farm family of Mr. Rajan has devoted land and explained how he is able to provide seedlings and panchagavya at a affordable rate, at 50 % lesser cost.



The team appreciated the dedication and approaches of AMEF team. They were appreciative also of the farm ponds design and location availing green shade to minimize evaporation losses and the way they are being managed. Dr. Tagat was quite appreciative and also suggested how it could be used for

manurial purposes. The visitors visited AMEF office, discussed how the programme is being monitored by community involvement through identification of Sustainable Agriculture Promoters. The transparent selection and assessment process for SAPs was also explained.

Field day: A Field day event was organized at Poocharampatti village on 14th December where 300 farmers from 10 villages participated. During the event, farmers interacted with each other, witnessed exhibits, charts and models depicting various LEISA practices and participatory learning processes. The various systematic interventions like group formation, collectivization and institutional models were discussed.

Sericulture initiative: To increase the farm income, sericulture was taken up at house hold level. In this context, 2000 mulberry plants were mobilized from Salem district and provided to 100 farmers in 5 villages at 20 per head which were planted in trenches and bunds created through Srivatsram supported Water conservation initiatives.

Mushroom Production: To inculcate the habit of mushroom consumption by farm families, mushroom production was taken up under with a target of 4-6 beds at their house hold level.

Kitchen gardens: As part of this initiative, ten types of vegetable seeds (varietal seeds) were provided to both the FFS groups in all the 10 villages. In total, 400 farmers have established kitchen garden in their back yards. So far, they have harvested 2-3 times. Around 70-80% of the produce is for household consumption.

Average yields of various vegetable crops collected from 400 farmers from 10 villages (kgs/family):

Crops	September to December 2018											
	Tomato	Brinjal	Bhendi	Ridge gourd	Bottle gourd	Bitter gourd	Cluster bean	Chilies	Amaranthus	Sirukeerai	Mulakeerai	Drum stick
Avg.yield	6	4	3	12	20	4	6	1	5 bundles	5 bundles	4 bundles	4 months
Note: These are staggered harvests (2-3 months) which supported each family to pick various vegetables on alternate days enabling diverse consumption												

Two Green Net Houses have been established in Poocharampatti and K Agraharam villages by the SAPs. These houses are preparing to produce biologicals such as Panchagavya and Neem Seed Kernal Extraction as well as nurseries.

Training on Livestock management: One day training on livestock management was conducted (19.03.2019) in which 30 farmers from 15 villages participated. The resource person was specialist

from Veterinary University Training and Research Institute (VUTRC). The topics included: Disease management of small and larger ruminants, traditional system (Ethio veterinary care), balanced feed preparation for both poultry and livestock. This helped the farmers to pick up some prophylactic actions to keep their farm animals safe against summer heat. They learnt also simple management tips like bathing animals daily, not to feed them in hot time, avoiding hot water drinks to animals, keeping the roof cool with moist gunny sacks, and clean milking procedures etc..

Promotion of backyard Poultry: Desi chicks of 600 birds were purchased from different sources (shandies, individuals etc.) and provided to 300 farm families who are EFG members from 15 villages. They were provided 2 chicks per family. They expressed keenness in rearing the chicks and agreed for a give back arrangement where 2 chicks (F1 generation) for enabling horizontal spread of the initiative.

Seed production: A One day seed production training was conducted on 23.3.2019 covering 15 farmers representing 15 villages. The topics handled by the specialist from KVK included seed stages, seed care, seed production, and storage. The training event also focused on the following – Need for seed banks at village level, importance of hybrid and varietal seeds, protecting traditional seeds.

On completion of seed production training, 5 types fodder seeds such as Agathi, Desmanthese, Muiyal masal, sweet sudan and CoFs 29 were distributed to 300 farmers who are members of EFGs. These farmers were also given with 12 types of vegetable seeds such as Dolichos, Bitter gourd, Snake gourd, Tomato, Chilly, *Palak*, Amaranthes and *Mola* greens, Pumpkin, Cluster bean, Moringa and Brinjal were provided to take up kitchen garden. The understanding with the group members is that the member gives back the given amount of seeds to the respective group which takes responsibility in contributing these fodder and vegetable seeds to the seed banks in the cluster seed centres. This will pave for collection of seeds and sharing of locally cultivated seeds with the farmers.

Furthering to the above seeds distribution, three seed centres have been established in Poocharampatti, Koppulur and K Agraharam villages. SAPs of each cluster have provided a space in their respective houses for the centre. Each seed centre is provided with one small scale table-top weighing balance (upto 30kgs), one big-scale weighing machine (upto 200kgs), one steel rack for storing seeds and one plastic bag sealing machine. The primary objective of the centre is to preserve traditional seeds available in the village. This will create a gene bank of local cultivars, seeds production to refresh vigor of seeds, fulfilling the seed requirements of the farmers and also enable collective purchase of seeds. All these three seed centres are managed by the respective cluster SAPs. The big-scale weighing machine will help farmers to weigh the grains before selling as they had been misguided by the traders using their own scales thereby losing 2-3 kgs per quintal.

Glyricidea planting on bunds was initiated in order to enhance biomass for soil application, as suggested by Dr.TM Thiagarajan, Trustee.

Cofinanced water conservation activity supported by Srivatsram: The village K.Puthur has acute water scarcity. Besides field trenches and farm ponds, rain water harvesting was initiated at Farmer's household level. The rain water harvesting systems were installed with 20 households in the months of September-October. Each system contained 1000 litres storage tank, pipe fittings all along the roof to collect the water. Each family have rendered their contribution in terms of labour support. There was only one rain received after the installation which enabled around 20000 litres of water harvested.

Supraja Programme – Dharwad Area Unit

ToT in Dharwad Area

The training was organized in the unit office premises in Dharwad. The 5-day training included a combination of technical learning on ecological farming, soil and water conservation measures, soil nutrient management and Integrated pests and diseases management practices. The learning exercises included both group work and games. There was a pre and post training assessment of the participants using the '*Ballot Box Exercises*' of 20 questions.

The topics included in the training were:

1. Participatory rural appraisal exercises
2. Eco-Farmers Groups
3. Farmers Field School and Participatory Technology Development
4. Soil fertility management
5. LEISA practices and Agro Eco System Analysis
6. Farm-allied activities – Dairy, Goatry, Poultry, Azolla, Mushroom, Kitchen Garden
7. Agro-forestry (bund plantations) towards climate resilient approaches
8. Institutional building

The training was inaugurated by Mrs. Usha Hooli, Assistant Director of Agriculture (Subject Matter Specialist), office of Joint Director of Agriculture, Dharwad, Mrs. Sheela Bhandarkar, Assistant General Manager and District development Manager, NABARD Dharwad, Mr. Ishwar Nath, Lead District Manager, Vijaya Bank, Hubli and Dr S S Dolli, Professor (Dept. of Agricultural Extension), University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad spoke on the opportunity provided by AMEF to farmers to practice ecological farming, farmer's commitment as farm guides in their respective villages and motivated them towards collective action. Mr Basavaraj, a retired Bank Manager was invited as resource person to explain the schemes on financial inclusion, insurance, benefits from the Government and the process of availing such schemes in the group. The importance of farmers' collectives and its cooperative schemes were explained and relevant information provided in the form of hand-outs.

The trainees were oriented through several practical learning methods for instance, identifying friendly and harmful pests in the albums. The Ballot Box exercises of 20 questions prior to starting of the training and after 5 days of training have been conducted. The questions were framed on simple understandings on various aspects of farming, especially from the point of ecological farming practices. The scores were tabulated and found that:

1. 72% of the participants have acquired new knowledge
2. 22% of the participants were already knowledgeable in the topics dealt as indicated in the correct answers voted in both pre and post exercises
3. 6% of participants still did not understand the practices (mostly absent during those days)
4. While 42% of the participants voted 'don't know' to the questions in the beginning, only 2% voted 'don't know' after the training indicating effectiveness of the training. Also, the 2% participants were those who did not attend on the first day or missed during the training course.

EFG Formation and Group Savings: Dharwad Unit has completed formation of all the 100 Eco Farmer Groups in the 20 project villages. The monthly meetings are in progress and the group members are doing in KCC Banks. In both Hubli and Dharwad clusters, baseline data collection from 1900 farmers was taken up and the forms are being processed into the ACCESS database

Farmer Field Schools: FFS was initiated in 10 villages. The FFS was done in Soyabean based cropping system with intercrop of Black gram, Navane, Green gram and Cowpea and border crop of Niger. This is being adopted in 8 villages namely, Parasapur, Rayanal, Ramapur, Anchatageri, Giryial, Halligeri and Devarahuballi. FFS on Maize based cropping system is being followed with intercrop of Redgram and border crop of Bajra in 2 villages namely Holtikote and Devagiri,

Initially, practice of seed treatment and use of biofertilisers like rhizobium, azospirillum, PSB and Trichoderma, has been adopted. In soyabean, the seed rate adopted was 24 Kg/acre instead of the prevalent 30 Kg/acre and in Maize, 5 Kg/acre instead of 6 KG/acre. Modular training groups were formed in 10 villages (30 farmers/Group). For them too, 2 modular training events were conducted for each group on the following aspects - Land preparation, Seed Selection, Seed treatment, Weed Management, Pest and disease management, Biological preparations.

In FFS events, few sessions on business integration were included. Where the integration was missed, the farmer groups were guided on various joint activities through Modular training events.

Dharwad region received good Southwest and Northeast monsoon that resulted in good yield of crops. In Soyabean, while the crop harvesting has been completed – the produce is heaped in the field to get dry fodder as well as to get comparatively better price (price of Soya bean is lower due to glut in the market). The threshing will be done in January-February 2019. In Holtikote and Devagiri villages, Maize crop harvesting and threshing has been completed.

The Maize crop yields and costs of cultivation is as follows. While the yields have been 16-18 q/acre in FFS plots, it has been 15.5 q/acre in control plots; the cost of production in FFS plot is Rs. 10,010.00 while it is Rs. 12,310.00 and the net income in FFS plot is Rs.16,090.00 while it is Rs.11,040.00 in control plot. In FFS plots the seeds were treated with Azospirillum, PSB and Trichoderma whereas in the non-FFS plots, it was not done. FYM was used in FFS plots while Urea and DAP were applied in the other plots. Redgram was introduced as intercrop in Maize in the FFS plots which was absent in the control plots. This resulted in additional yield of 10 kgs besides acting as a trap-crop.

Crop	Average yield in normal plots	Average yield in FFS Plots	Average cost of production in non FFS plots	Average cost of production in FFS plots	Average Net income in non FFS plots	Average Net income in FFS plots
Maize	15.5 quintals/acre	16-18 quintals/acre	Rs 12,310	Rs 10,010	Rs 11,040	Rs 16,090

Broadly, the improvements can be attributed to options adopted which the farmers understood by trying them out. In FFS plots, the seeds were treated with Azospirillum, PSB and Trichoderma whereas in the non-FFS plots, it was not done. FYM was applied in FFS plots while Urea and DAP were applied in the other plots. Redgram was introduced as intercrop in Maize in the FFS plots which was absent in the control plots, which resulted in additional yield of 10 kgs besides acting as a trap-crop.

This result reflected in the farmers participation in the Farmers Field Days conducted in two villages. FFS Farmers participated, shared and demonstrated their experiences and benefits with the fellow farmers.

ARCADIS supported Farmer sharing Meet



ARCADIS supported programme:

Efforts were made to organise a very impactful event with the additional support received from ARCADIS to enhance farmer to farmer sharing. Besides showcasing to ARCADIS the uniqueness of AMEF's approaches, the effort was to showcase branding of ARCADIS support. Most importantly, farmer managed farmer meet was organised spectacularly with bullock cart colourful processions throughout the village. The best

practices handout was released by the farmer's themselves highlighting the local practices promoted by AMEF, which have become popular.

ARCADIS reflections on the farmer meet

- Very impressed with the nativity of the programme, the colour and the customs.
- Farmers understanding, and explanations were brilliant the benefits of non-chemical, pesticide free cultivation
- Farmer's passion was visible, compliments to dedication of AMEF team for creating such ownership...must be because of the Trust they have in AMEF team.
- Swamiji's motivational introductory speech was brilliant
- Felt like coming back home, with the ambience, the traditional dresses, and awesome energy.
- Everybody was equal, no distinctions of any kind noticeable at all.
- The high involvement of women was really spectacular

<i>Arcadis co –financed programme</i>	Farmers	Results
<i>Training:</i> Farmer Field Schools - Season long events (5 FFS – 5 groups 10 dry land farmers per group) (50 farmers) Special training events	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved yields in Maize • 1.5Q/acre yield increased • Rs. 2300/acre cost of production reduced Rs. 5050/acre net income increased
<i>Adoption:</i> Critical Inputs for Ecological Farm Models - manures, biological Seed production/ Azolla cultivation – Innovative approaches Field Guidance for adoption	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composting and vermicomposting using crop residues , Botanicals preparation (NSKE, Panchagavya) • Household level seeds collection and preservation initiated, Azolla production taken up • Kitchen gardens established for better nutrient access Supported to improve farmers knowledge level
<i>Branding, Visibility:</i> Field days - Farmer to Farmer exchange with visitors (Event management) Community resource centre (One for 5 villages cluster)	450 120	Farmers shared their learning in FFS and exhibited the models in exhibition 5 eco farmers groups conducting meeting doing savings and discussing the field related problems; utilizing the reading materials and selling their farm produce like Vegetables, Milk; Bulk marketing every Saturday with village level vegetables shandy market; Sharing of farm implements i.e Cycle weeder, Sprayers, Sugarcane bud remover etc.

Community Resource Centre: In Holtikote village on 10th of December 2018, a resource center was established. 130 farmers participated in the inaugural function. The details of activities being undertaken are presented under the section on ARCADIS supported programme.

In addition, a booklet on popular Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Kannada vernacular was released and distributed to the participating farmers by farmers.

The most significant aspect of the farmers to farmers meeting was that farmers managed the event as well as established stalls of their village to showcase learnings. The farmers were honoured by visitors for their committed enthusiasm and contribution.

Farmers Sharing Meetings: Dharwad Area has conducted 2 Farmers to Farmers sharing meetings. The first meeting was held in Rayanala village of Hubli Taluk covering 5 villages held on August 30 where nearly 250 farmers participated. The second meeting was conducted in Devarahubballi village for the Dharwad Taluk farmers from 5 villages on September 8 in which 450 farmers had participated. The purpose of the meetings was to provide opportunity to the FFS and MT farmers to share their learnings and benefits from the field exercises and group activities. Also, farmers got aware of various ecological farming methods and practices. In both the meetings, the collaborating farmers had been honoured for their contribution and sharing of resources.

Donor's visit: Coinciding with the farmer sharing meeting, in Rayanal village, a donor visit was organized on 30th August 2018. Shri Laxminarayana of Supraja Foundation visited the field as well as interacted with large number of farmers. The men and women farmers were from Rayanal, Parasapur, Ramapur, Anchatageri, Giryial villages. Farmers organised exhibits as their own village group stalls, and shared their learnings. Farmers from five villages participated in the field day. Around 252 farmers trained through FFS and MT displayed their learnings as well as group savings. Other dignitaries whom the donor met during the event included Agriculture Officers from RSK Hubli and Chabbi, progressive farmers, women SHG members and local elected members. Shri Laxminarayana distributed certificates, as well as kitchen garden seeds to the farmers. He visited the FFS collaborator plot to observe the difference in approaches and outcomes. He expressed that he was deeply impressed with AMEF's efforts and outcomes, particularly farmers' enthusiasm and understanding in adopting farm alternatives. He also visited the office to review the programme records which are being maintained, and appreciated the clarity in maintaining records.

Kitchen Gardens: 250 farm families have taken up vegetable cultivation which includes Brinjal, Tomato, Chilli, Cluster bean, Radish, Coriander, Methi, Palak, Bhendi, Beans, Ridge gourd and Bitter gourd in their backyards, thus, being able to consume organic and fresh vegetables.

Compost and vermicompost production: 30 composting and 38 vermicompost units were established availing linkage with DoA and Gram Panchayat under MNREGA programme. In Murakatti village, women eco-farming group has started selling the earth worms to neighboring farmers to earn additional income apart from using manure on their own farms.

Green Fodder production: 52 farmers have taken up fodder production using hybrid Napier grass slips and 32 Azolla fits were established to feed the livestock.

Seed Collection Initiative: In this region about 110 farmers from 8 villages in Hubli and Dharwad Talukas have saved Soyabean seeds. Each farmer has saved 30kgs required for one acre. This is a new beginning made this year by these farmers. Apart from this, the farmers have also stored Redgram, Green Gram, Cowpea seeds for intercrops in Soyabean. In G Basavanakoppa village one FFS group farmer purchased Soyabean cleaning and grading machine. He extended this service to the other farmers in the group, cleaning the grains free of stones, dust and husk on a small charge basis of Rs 25/ql. Thus the farmers saved clean and good quality seeds. They also benefitted in getting an additional price of Rs 120/ql as they sold cleaned and graded grains in the market.

Farmers Collective Marketing Initiative: In Holtikote village 20 farmers came together to pool Maize for collective marketing. In all 150 quintals of Maize was collected and invited a trader for bulk marketing. After negotiations, fixed the price at Rs 1400/quintal which was more by Rs 30/quintal in the wholesale market with the condition of lifting the bulk from the village itself. In this process, the farmers saved Rs 50/quintal in transportation and additional Rs 10/quintal in handling/labour charges. The farmers also gained in less deduction of 2 kgs/quintal by the traders than the usual deduction of 3-4 kgs/quintal.

Study Tour: Forty farmers from 20 villages visited Mr.Basavaraj Navi Farm, a progressive farmer's field in Sukanalli, Shirahattitaluk, Gadag District. The farmer has been producing 18 varieties of

biologicals and practicing organic farming. The farmers visited the production units in his field where Basavaraj explained the preparations, ingredients and the benefits of its application. He also showed different fields with varieties of rainfed and irrigated crops. He had diverse tree and crop species on his 7 acres of land including Mulberry for sericulture. Motivated by the visit, 10 farmers in Giriyaal, Anchatageri, Holtikote and G.Basavanakoppa villages have started preparing Neem Seed Kernel Extract, Panchagavya and Jeevamrutha, on a larger scale to meet the requirements of the group.

NABARD Training: Team Leader, Dharwad along with Mr. Malla Reddy, in-charge of Telangana project attended the training programme conducted on 17-19 December 2018 for NGOs promoting FPOs, Farmer Clubs and other farmer organizations. The programme focused on how various schemes could be availed.

Supraja – Chintamani Unit

ToT in Kolar Area

The ToT for 20 selected farmers was conducted in the Chintamani Krushi Vigyan Kendra. As the venue was in KVK, participants were mostly male farmers. Hence, the fourth day training was conducted in Gunturgadda village where 30 women had participated for the relevant practical learning exercises. The ToT was inaugurated by Dr Rajanna, Professor, Sericulture College and Dr Manjunath, Senior Scientist and Head KVK. They spoke of the present farming practices that are unsustainable on a long term with the pests and diseases showing resistances to the chemicals. The higher doses of these chemicals, as shared by them, are showing impact on the health of the human beings due to higher doses of chemicals with carcinogenic effects. The speakers emphasized on the traditional farming practices with the integration of modern ecological farming techniques. In this context, they gave emphasis on the ToT organized by AMEF. They encouraged the farmers to go-round the KVK field demonstration plots to learn on Integrated Farming Practices, Mulberry cultivation and vegetable garden.

The Ballot Box exercises were conducted to assess the **knowledge of the participant farmers**. Pre and post training exercises and its analysis has revealed increased knowledge to the extent of 'excellent' in 40% of the participants, 'good' in 15%, 'better' in 45%.

- The participants expressed satisfaction on time spent in learning new topics, practices in agriculture and crop management, the first of its kind to many of them
- The games in between helped them to learn importance of the concepts and practices on soil nutrients management, soil and water conservation identification of predator and harmful pests
- New bonding has developed between farmers around common practices.
- Expect refresher course of the training next year
- Gained knowledge and are ready to lead in their respective villages with the fellow farmers
- Expressed willingness to cooperate and support in field activities with the farming community

All the participants got participation certificate which pleased them as most of them said that they received such recognition for the first time in their life.

Eco Farmer Groups: A total of 77 in 20 villages have been formed. The formation of remaining 23 groups would be completed by June 2019. Baseline data has been collected from 1765 farmers as against the 2000 farmers. All these members of EFG's have contributed their savings which are maintained in groups' bank accounts. The remaining are to be covered before the end of May 2019.

Farmer Field Schools: During this period, Farmer Field Schools were in progress in 10 villages in Groundnut and Ragi, the two major crops of the region.

The topics covered in the FFS for the Groundnut and Ragi crop based systems include include soil sampling, soil fertility management, water holding capacity in soils, land preparation, soil moisture conservation methods and staggered nurseries. Also, covered were topics relevant during the season which included Agro Eco System Analysis (AESAs), calculation of manurial requirement, sowing methods, seed treatment with bio-agents, opening furrows, gap filling and importance of application of Gypsum. During the month of August, the FFS farmers focused on learning about pest and disease

management through “insect zoo” observations, soil nutrient mining and importance of micro-nutrients. Further, the sessions covered use of different weeders, vermi-composting methods and pest traps.

Modular Trainings: In the selected 10 villages, 10 Modular Training events of one day duration in a month have been conducted for 2-3 groups comprising 40-60 farmers per village (60-65% - women and 35-40% men). The topics covered included preparation of Biologicals, growing Kitchen gardens, Azolla cultivation, Vermi composting and Rabbit rearing.

In the Chintamani region in Chikkaballapur District, crop growth was affected by severe rainfall deficit of 55%. The actual rainfall received for the year 2018 was 348.94mm against an average annual rainfall of 778mm. Generally, the yields of Ragi are around 8-10 q/acre and Groundnut around 5.5q -6 q per acre. The gaps in rainfall occurrence during the peak crop season of June to August affected the peg initiation in Groundnut and panicle initiation in Finger millet. The Finger millet and Groundnut had poor quality grain as well as reduced yield. In Finger millet, FFS plot **yielded 3.5 quintals/acre** whereas in control plots the yields were 2.8 quintals (average of 7 FFS plots). Groundnut FFS plot **yielded 3.8 quintals/acre** while control plots yielded 3.2 quintals (average of 3 FFS plots).

Field days and sharing events were organized on Groundnut based cropping system. Around 207 farmers participated and shared their experience, during the events.

Donor visit: Mr. Lakshminarayana, Programme Executive of Supraja Foundation visited a project village in Chintamani Area where he observed the FFS experimental plot and participated in the Farmers Field Day in Musturpatna village. He appreciated the progress as well as recognized the challenges being faced by the communities.

Seed Collection Initiative: In the group interactions, farmer groups have been motivated to store seeds like Ragi, Redgram, Lab lab, and Horsegram at household level. This initiative is to facilitate farmers to store required seeds and then to pool at the cluster level as a Seed bank/centre. Motivated by this 10 farmers in Gunturgadda village have stored 20kgs of Ragi, 5kgs of Redgram, 10kgs each of Lab lab and Horsegram in their houses. A group member has come forward to provide a room for establishing a seed bank/centre for the farmers.

Kitchen Gardens: Kitchen garden seeds were distributed to 5 Eco farmers groups (EFGs) in 5 villages. These included, vegetable seeds like Brinjal, Tomato, Chilli, Cluster bean, Radish, Corriander, Methi, Palak, Bhendi, Beans, Ridgegaurd and Bittergourd among the farmers groups. This is to ensure self reliance with regard to seed, promote habit of seed sharing and most importantly, help the farmers grow and consume nutritious food. Kitchen Gardens have benefitted around 100 households.

Promotion of Azolla: Six farmers in Gunthuradda, Yeriahgarahalli, Gownchirupalli, Yenigadale, Musturupatna and Salamakalahalli have established Azolla stocks in the backyard and fed it to milching cows regularly. They got yields of 1.5 to 2 kg/day and everyday Azolla is mixed with the cattle feed and fed three times a day. G Srinavas Reddy, a farmer in Gunthurgadda village has reported improved fat content and increased milk by 1litre a day after using Azolla as animal feed for 6 months. He has 2 cows and a calf in his house. Realising the benefit, established one more pit in the backyard. He is a member of the Chintamani Taluka Farmers Association. In a meeting, he shared about the Azolla cultivation and its benefits. Encouraged by this, farmers in different villages have purchased 1kg of seeds by paying Rs 50/kg and are cultivating Azolla for the feed.

Co-finance from KStePs - Vermicompost pits and backyard poultry: Under the KStePs project of the Govt. of Karnataka, in the project villages, special thrust was given to support farmers to take up homestead poultry and vermicomposting operations. Nineteen vermicompost pits have been constructed in 5 villages. On request by farmers, around 1006 Kadaknath chicks, a black coloured special variety from Maharashtra, was provided to 200 farmers in 10 villages.

LEISA India

LEISA magazine is recognized as the leading magazine for sharing field based experiences in Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture. LEISA India, published in English, is the regional Indian edition of Agricultures Network of the global LEISA magazines, presently coordinated by IED Afrique, Senegal. With continued support from MISEREOR from 2017, LEISA India programme continued to strengthen grass root level knowledge sharing through local language editions (Kannada, Hindi, Tamil, Oriya, Telugu, Punjabi and Marathi) and limited copies of print edition of English. Besides print editions, magazine is widely distributed as e-copy, downloadable on the website and shared in social media.

LEISA India magazine is being produced from the year 1999. The Indian edition (LEISA India) of the global magazine Farming Matters (earlier called as LEISA Magazine) was supported by ILEIA, The Netherlands till 2010-11. Later on, the initiative was funded by MISEREOR in two phases (2011-14 and 2014-17). From April 2017, MISEREOR further continued its support for the programme for another three year period (2017-20). Besides limited copies of English print edition, MISEREOR has been supporting production and distribution of four issues per year of 4 language editions (Kannada, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu) and two issues per year for two new language editions– Punjabi and Marathi.

LEISA India continues to be part of the global Agricultures Network whose Secretariat has been shifted to IED Afrique upon closure of ILEIA. LEISA India programmes' global outreach as well as roles in global governance are evolving during the transition year with fresh support from **Swedbio** to support the process and continuity of the Network activities to a limited extent.

1. English Edition

During this period, four issues of LEISA India magazine were produced.

a) Biological Crop Management (V.20, no.2, June 2018)

This issue included 8 full length articles. The issue focused on ground experiences on how small farmers are using biological methods to enhance soil fertility, manage pest incidence and increase farm resilience. The magazine was of 36 pages.

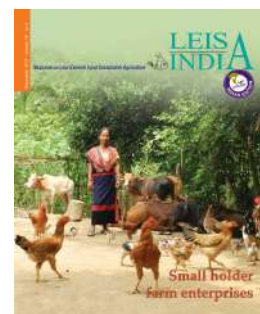
There was a very good response to call for papers. We received 11 articles in response to call for papers to this issue. Out of them 6 were selected, one was proactively sourced and one more was drawn from the global pool of articles.



b) Small holder Farm Enterprises (V.20, no.3, September 2018)

The issue included 7 full length articles and a farmers diary feature. The experiences in this issue show that farm based enterprises that are easy to manage, less risky and generate better incomes, when promoted, have the potential to alleviate rural poverty, eradicate malnutrition and create employment opportunities too.

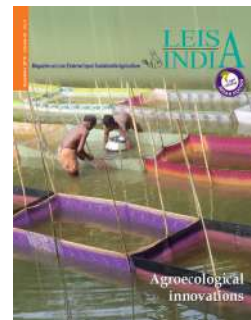
The response to the call for this issue was excellent. We received around 20 articles in response to call for papers and selected 7. The magazine was of 36 pages.



c) Agroecological Innovations (V.20, no.4, December 2018)

This issue included 6 full length articles. The issue focused on ground experiences on how small farmers are innovating in not only sustaining agriculture but also as a means of addressing various challenges facing farming presently. The magazine was of 36 pages.

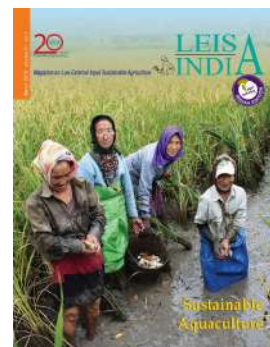
We received 10 articles in response to call for papers to this issue. Out of them 4 were selected, one was proactively sourced and one more was drawn from an already published source.



d) Sustainable Aquaculture (V.21, no.1, March 2019)

This is the first time in the last 20 years that LEISA India has dealt with this theme on aquaculture. The issue included 6 full length articles. In response to the call for articles, we received around 13 articles and finally selected 6. The experiences in this issue show that small scale aquaculture is sustainable and farmers are managing by innovating on their farms. The magazine was of 36 pages.

LEISA India is celebrating its two decades of knowledge sharing in agroecology. To share with our readers, we included a note on LEISA India's journey in the last two decades, in this issue. We also developed a logo. (See Annexure 1)



2. Special language editions

Special language editions are produced in 7 languages – Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Oriya, Marathi and Punjabi. While the first five language editions were being produced from the Phase I of the project (from 2011), two editions, Marathi and Punjabi, were added during phase II.

The five language editions – Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Oriya are produced four times a year (June, September, December and March). The two editions – Marathi and Punjabi are produced two times a year (June and December). All the language editions include translations of selected articles from the LEISA India English edition.

During the reporting period, the following issues were produced

June 2018 - 7 language editions were produced.

September 2018 - 5 language editions were produced.

December 2018 - 7 language editions were produced.

March 2019 - 5 language editions were produced

The **June 2018 & December 2018** had issue of the special translated editions in Hindi, Kannada, Oriya, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Punjabi

The language editions are distributed primarily to grassroot institutions which depend heavily on the local language. Presently the outreach of language editions is 13475.

June 2018 Edition

						
Hindi	Kannada	Oriya	Tamil	Telugu	Marathi	Punjabi

September 2018 Edition

				
Hindi	Kannada	Oriya	Tamil	Telugu

December 2018 Edition

						
Hindi	Kannada	Oriya	Tamil	Telugu	Marathi	Punjabi

March 2019 Edition

				
Hindi	Kannada	Oriya	Tamil	Telugu

1. Outreach

LEISA India magazines are disseminated through various ways

1. **Print Copy** – English and Language Editions Print copies reach readers at the grassroot level. Around 3307 copies of English edition and 13498 copies of language editions (all 7 languages) are disseminated as hard copies. **(total 16805)**
2. **E-magazine** – English edition is also disseminated through email as an e-copy for those who have access to internet. Around 7300 readers are reached through e-copy

3. **LEISA India website** – All the editions are being uploaded on the website. In the reporting period, there were 13085 users of the website with 30207 page views.

4. Supportive Activities

a) Database management

English Edition

A database is being maintained for English edition. The total number of subscribers for the **English Edition** as of March 2019 is **9017**. They are reached by print or E-magazine. Around 1590 readers receive both print and e-magazine. There is 1.7% increase in the readership compared to previous reporting period. The increase is primarily in the outreach of e-copy.

Across various categories, NGOs formed the major chunk with 29%, followed by academics (22%) and researchers (12%). Around 11% of the readers are farmers and farmer organisations. Around 5% of the readers are students.

Language Editions

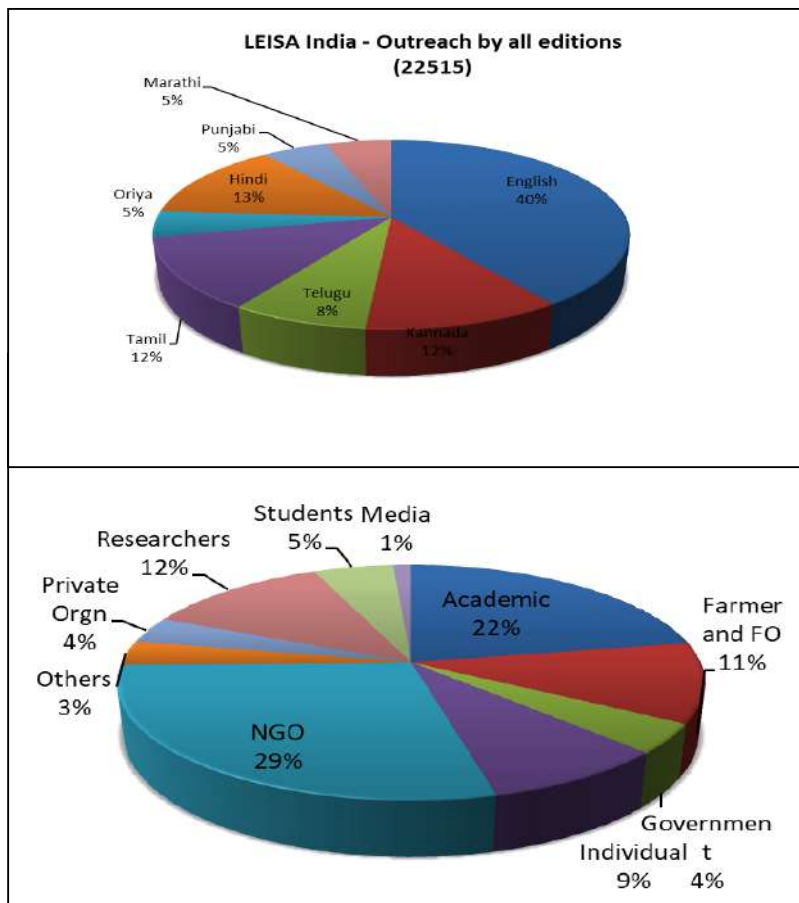
A separate access database is being maintained for the language editions. At the end of the reporting period (March 2019), the database included **13498** number of readers across seven language editions who receive print copy of the magazine.

b) Website

All the editions (English and 7 Language editions) are uploaded regularly on the website. (www.leisaindia.org).

c) Social Networking

Through social media LEISA is reaching a much larger readership. Articles of LEISA India and write-ups on agroecology are shared on Facebook and Twitter regularly. Presently, it has got 5316 likes on Face Book.



Dissemination in larger forums: The magazines were presented in various workshops, both nationally and globally. Partner organisations have been displaying language edition magazines at the local level during meets and fests. These displays have garnered a lot of subscriptions too for the magazine

Celebrating 20 years of LEISA India – the product, the process and the movement

It all started in 1998. We started with just distributing quarterly ILEIA Newsletter to Indian readers, around 1000. Within a year, we got ambitious. After releasing a couple of Indian supplements, in the year 1999, we started publishing a full fledged Indian English edition – LEISA India. Since then, LEISA India has become one of the most preferred magazines for sharing practical field based ecological experiences. Published four times in an year, the magazine includes a combination of global and Indian experiences.

All along, we believed that it is not just a publication but a knowledge exchange movement. We forged a consortium of like minded partners consisting of GEAG, Kudumbam and Myrada to explore ways of strengthening knowledge building as well as sharing. Recognising systematic documentation as a crucial necessity for sharing field experiences, in early 2000, LEISA India team successfully guided the consortium for two years on systematic documentation and knowledge management. Also, LEISA India team of AME Foundation, on its own and in collaboration with ILEIA, guided several national and international documentation initiatives with international partners like MISEREOR, Caritas, as well as FAO.

In an effort to reach out to more number of readers, especially the grassroots, in 2009, we launched three language editions – Hindi, Kannada and Tamil, in collaboration with our consortium partners, GEAG, Mitramadhyama Trust and Kudumbam. In 2010, we further spread to Telugu and Odiya language editions in collaboration with our Odiya partner, ORRISSA. We further spread our outreach in 2014 to Marathi and Punjabi readers with help of Yuva Rural Association and Khethi Virasat Mission. Currently, the magazine is being produced in seven languages – Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Marathi, Punjabi and Oriya. All the editions put together reaches more than 22000 readers across the country. Besides the print edition, the digital edition and the social media have helped in reaching out to many more interested in ecological agriculture.

The magazine is popular for its practical content. Our readers surveys and impact studies reveal extensive use of the magazine for field purposes, training, policy support as well as further sharing within their own networks.

To create a platform for sharing experiences from the field is never easy for the Editors. Being a thematic magazine, the experience to be shared has to be suitable for the theme of the magazine. It has to be sourced from those active in the field. It has to reflect deep insights and learnings on field realities and alternatives. It has to be written by practitioners who seldom write. In this challenging scenario, we deeply acknowledge the commitment and enthusiasm of all our readers and authors who have been supporting the magazine as well as promoting wider sharing, thus strengthening an alternative paradigm of agroecological movement.

LEISA India has spearheaded significantly several themes and movements like SRI, International Year of Family Farming etc. LEISA India programme has also brought out several products like calendars and posters to popularise LEISA Movement. LEISA India, a member of global Agricultures Network, has been part of international deliberations and exchanges in partnership with partners in Latin America, Brazil, Africa and Asia and Europe through Agricultures Network. A small programme has thus transformed into a movement, ably supported by DGIS (through ILEIA), IDRC and MISEREOR.

Humbly continuing...to be relevant and useful.

LEISA India contributions for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019

Around Rs.8.09 lakhs has been received as voluntary contributions from readers, so far, with Rs.27,431 during the year. A part of the contribution is being used as co-finance for the programme..

Readers Feedback

The June issue on "Biological Crop Management" has very valuable information. I found that almost all the articles in the magazine are useful and inspire others to do agriculture.

K Soorappan (114781), 5th Nov.2018

Your magazine is very informative and it gives real examples of working with small farmers.

M. D. Piyathilaka, Consultant

Thank you for the excellent inputs and dissemination of the same to the farming community as well as other stakeholders in a simple and lucid manner. I consider LEISA India as the 'Readers Digest' of the farming community and agricultural extension workers of the country. Since my Agricultural college days I am an avid reader of LEISA and the contents helped me to grow on my thoughts, practical convictions in field situation as well as channelize my research thoughts to support the farmers firstly. The selection of contents for each issue is commendable since it truly reflects the needs and concerns of the real tillers. Moreover an inclusive approach towards rural youths, women, students and the real experiences of who toil and tills the soil are valuable and a reference material to keep and use. My sincere congratulations and kudos to all the team behind this most loved, valuable friend, philosopher and guide in my journey as an extension person, social science researcher and a humble farmer.

Anitha kumari P (117548) Principal Scientist (Agrl. Extn)

The articles are very visible like Biological crop management, Biological farm pond, Fish Amino, Women Entrepreneur, Biological crop management. All the story very interesting and insightful. May god guide you and bless you to continue forever the magazine and reach to the development sector in time.

Lingaraj Panigrahi-HELP NGO-Odisha (103933)

We are regular readers of the magazine. We get a lot of ideas from the magazine. The December 2018 issue has very practical information for farmers and NGOs

J D Loius, Thuda, Ranchi, Jharkhand, (111157) 7th Feb 2019

Fund Raising, Networking, Staff and Administrative Matters

After prolonged discussions, ARCADIS has agreed to support AME Foundation field programme in Dharwad with a small outlay of 6 lakhs for one year in Dharwad. This was for organising a farmer sharing event and starting a community resource centre. ARCADIS has identified 6 representatives after a rigorous filtering process internally to visit the field day. The field day was planned as a branding event also in September to showcase farmer's efforts in understanding and adopting alternatives and the contribution made by ARCADIS to the process. After the spectacular field day which was highly appreciated by ARCADIS (highlighted in Supraja programme report), another proposal was submitted to ARCADIS to support innovative local storage facilities for seeds in Dharwad driven by community led enterprises, pending for approval.

Srivatsram agreed to support Water conservative initiatives in Dharmapuri as a pilot project and in Telangana one more year of support. It was told that they would like to conclude their support with this year.

Supraja is providing core programme support to Dharmapuri, Dharwad and Chintamani field programmes. Complementary activities undertaken with Srivatsram (Water conservation); ARCADIS (Field day and Community Resource centre) and KStePS (poultry initiatives) served as complementary activities and also co-finance for the Supraja funded programme.

Agricultures Network secretariat in IED, Dakar, Senegal, submitted proposal on behalf of global Agricultures Network which helped in getting co-finance for few activities in Misereor supported LEISA India programme. IED, Senegal, acting as Secretariat of Agricultures Network, succeeded in getting additional support for maintaining **digital platform** of agroecological experiences. for the year 2019-20 as well as global advocacy efforts. ED has played a critical role in building alliances with global network of abc Secretariat in Dhan Foundation as well as suggesting role clarity of partners in the decentralized governance of the global network.

As we are recognized as a leading partner and also as the member of the Governance Group, facilitating the process, the IED Secretariat suddenly offered residuary funds available (2017-18) from previous year to the partners and asked them to come up with acceptable proposals by the network. This had to be done within a fortnight and funds spent before the end of the year. We proposed two activities – a partial travel grant to represent AMEF in strategic consultative meeting at Delhi and preparation of an agroecological desk calendar for the network. AMEF was the only one to take up the offer and the sanction was made. The desk calendar was completed in a record time of ten days with the product showcasing agroecological efforts in different contexts. **More importantly, this was also used for branding 20 years of LEISA India completion.** As member of the Governance Group as well as other functional groups, ED has been interacting with the Agricultures Network secretariat and partners for taking the movement forward and seeking support for promotion of agroecology movements in India.



Senior management people from a multinational organization (3M), as part of their own 15 day programme of orientation to different sectors, chose to visit AME Foundation. Thus, AMEF was shortlisted by them based on several interactions and study of our documents and website after a three month long process. It was election time in Karnataka. They visited the field in Dharmapuri twice and were very impressed with their interaction with the farmers. They termed the visit as a deep learning and memorable experience. They went through our activities, presented their perceptions on how farmers could get more incomes. All the expenses of their

visit, field visit including hosting by their local partner was funded from their own funds while we

offered our premises for their study as well as organized field visits. The spin off from this visit and subsequent relationship building with 3M team was quite significant.



AMEF received a call from **Global Giving** organization based in US for submitting a **due diligence form** (indicating all about us) expressing interest in consideration for potential donors to support AMEF. We were referred by 3M which led to this. After prolonged interaction and persuasion, Global Giving, a US based organization, which recognizes 3M as its partner has processed our application and agreed to support. In this

connection, a note was prepared on Why Corpus Fund is necessary which formed the basis for negotiations. Finally, it offered a non-project support of 10000 dollars.

Dr. Venkatesh Tagat also suggested that AMEF with its vast repository of knowledge on dry land agriculture and LEISA India experiences prepare a proposal to Supraja Foundation for creation of a knowledge base on the theme.

A new proposal was prepared seeking support for extending the Supraja programme to Telangana Area. Currently, Supraja is providing support to Dharmapuri, Dharwad and Chintamani field programmes. Clarifications sought regarding various aspects have been provided to Supraja team. We are hoping and awaiting a positive response to our request.

Financial utilization of non FCRA and FCRA programmes was done meticulously to showcase to donors the utilization as well as provide clarity to multiple auditors reviewing the programmes. Several protocols have been put in place in consultation to enable donors as well as auditors to recognize and certify the efforts. This has been appreciated by donors – Misereor, Supraja, Srivatsram, ARCADIS. Systematic generation of co-finance is an ongoing activity for both field as well as knowledge programmes.

Misereor's internal auditor has disallowed the arrangement of rental payment to AME Foundation by the project. Misereor team requested us to desist from following the arrangement and would not recognize the expenditure shown in project for the last two and half years. We agreed to comply with the request. Alternative arrangements were made to ensure the co-finance percentage does not get adversely affected

Networking

Mr. Sanjay Phansalkar of the Tata group shared the positive findings of TATA research study team's independent findings on AMEF kitchen garden initiatives in Dharmapuri. This was brought out as part of their independent research study done across 4 Indian states.

ED from AMEF was invited to be on the panel discussion of Fireflies – Sustainable incomes from Millet Farming organised by Karnataka Agriculture Prices Commission -07.03.2018. The focus was on how millet farmers services could be recognised and compensated. Dr. T N Prakash, Chairman Karnataka Agriculture Prices Commission, was the key person who promised to collaborate with AMEF programmes in the future.

ED was invited to the 3rd meeting to participate in NABARD Regional advisory Group meeting (RAG) on Agriculture and Rural Development in Karnataka on 27th March 2018. Dr. Ayyayapan and Dr. Ganagi who were the primary speakers during the discussion showed keenness to visit AME Foundation and meet our Chairman.

ED was invited to be on one of the panels in International Dialogue on Millets, organized on 15-17 April 2018, by MS Swaminathan Foundation. Besides AMEF's approaches, the need to recognize the multiple contributions Millet farmer makes to Ecosystems, Food and nutritional security and climate resilient production systems, was highlighted. Also, it was pointed out that farmer's own family food security cannot be undermined or ignored. Our presentation was well received. ED met several agencies promoting millets, those who are supporting processing and marketing, those who are helping in marketing. Also, contacts with IFAD and Biodiversity International were revived who are key players in the international development landscape, among several others.

Co-sponsoring public event



Enhanced visibility with general public was attempted by AMEF by co-sponsoring a popular public event organized by the Vivekananda Group of Institutions. The renowned singer Shri S P Balasubramanyam, consented to perform in Bangalore for the NGO as it was involved in Palliative Care projects. By co-sponsoring the event, we were noticed by the singer as well as the invitees with our posters and logo prominently appearing during the programme.

An article was contributed by ED on the topic 'Science Education Policy' to Political Affairs magazine brought out from Delhi. The views were primarily based on his experience in various sectors (including management institutions, industrial R&D) where ED worked earlier.

ED and TM Radha participated in the inaugural meeting of the **Decade of Family Farming** launch meeting convened by Sewa and supported by IFAD and FAO. ED acted as one of the facilitators. Subsequently, we have been asked to co-ordinate the movement jointly with SEWA by the National working committee, which needs to be formalized further. ED has been guiding SEWA as member of the Decade of Family Farming committee the way forward which includes potential roles AMEF could play in the future in strengthening Family Farming.

ED was invited by Dhan Foundation for their Board meeting and has been asked to continue for another two years as part of strategic decision making team. It is a great learning experience as DHAN are pioneers in several development initiatives.

A new opportunity is being explored with JP Morgan India Ltd. which would be visiting AMEF as part of their development assignment similar to 3M.

Dr. T M Thiyagarajan informed that the proposed SRM University's International Conference on "Innovative Climate-Smart Sustainable Crop Production Systems for Livelihood Security" has been postponed to the month of September 2019. He informed that AMEF's Chairman has gracefully consented to be on the Steering Committee. The Board felt that Dr. Thiyagarajan's SRI book could be translated and released during the event, if possible. Besides the Kannada version, Chairman added that efforts should be made to get it translated into Punjabi where farm and water crisis is most acute.

An article was contributed by ED on the topic 'Science Education Policy' to Political Affairs magazine brought out from Delhi. The views were primarily based on experience in various sectors (including management institutions, industrial R&D) where ED worked earlier.

Staff matters

Teams sharing progress, learnings and case stories



Every staff member contributed tirelessly with enthusiasm and expertise in ensuring overall success of AMEF programmes, meeting financial compliances, through excellent commitment and team work. However, some standout contributions are being mentioned below. Ms. TM Radha made unique and significant contributions in making conceptual and operational clarity with regard to programme matters of Supraja, specially, preparing pedagogy of FFS sessions; suggesting models for farmer led institutionalization processes; designing Baseline data formats as well implementation on ACCESS database; monitoring and evaluation

systems and financial protocols and designing the global agroecological desk calendar. This is in addition to managing LEISA India programme and sharing administrative responsibilities as Additional Director. Mr. Krishnan besides making significant progress in conceptualizing and integrating business approaches in FFS; contributed an article to National conference on the criticality of soil health and the only one who contributed field articles in LEISA India; and helping his colleague to contribute to Farmer Diary for LEISA India. Mr. Mallikarjun led the team very effectively in organizing spectacular Field Days which impressed everyone including the Donors like ARCADIS. He was constantly pursuing convergence from other actors, motivating communities to take up joint initiatives through establishment of community resource centre, initially supported by ARCADIS and voluntary efforts of communities. Mr. Elangovan and Mr. Prasanna are handling additional and multiple accounting responsibilities impressively with lot of patience and commitment. Ms. Supriya as part time Internal Auditor, has been excellent in fulfilling all the statutory requirements of the organization with constantly emerging new compliance requirements.

Institutionalisation – step by step approach of each team



Visioning exercises by Team



Admin matters

An unprecedented crisis occurred with a ransom ware attack on April 1st making all our files on the Bangalore server inaccessible. This means almost 2 decades of current as well as past data was affected. A series of recovery steps were planned and executed by resorting data from the backups and recreation of files by each individual staff. We succeeded in saving our data.

The tenant, the EXIDE battery shop, has been irregular with the payments of rent for couple of years, which has become more acute since January 2019. He has been requested to vacate and issued a notice with the letter issued by Treasurer and approved by Chairman. These two developments have put a pressure on the rental income which partially supports staff costs of support staff.

Staff as on 31.03.2019

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
Bengaluru		
1	Prasad K V S	Executive Director & Chief Editor
2	Radha T M	Managing Editor - LEISA India
3	Rukmini G G	Secretary
4	Elangovan R	Secretary – Accounts
5	Supriya S Rao	Internal Auditor
6	Shivappa	Driver
7	Chikkanna	Attendant
8	Murthy N	Attendant
Dharwad		
1	Mallikarjun Patil	Team Leader
2	Prasanna V	Secretary cum Accountant
Dharmapuri		
1	Krishnan J	Team Leader

Consultants and Contractual Staff		
Sl. No.	Name	Area
1	J Srinath	Bengaluru
2	Veena Markande	Bengaluru
3	Ramachandra K S	Bengaluru
4	Nagendra Rao V	Bengaluru
5	T Mallareddy	Telangana
6	Mayachari A	Dharwad
7	Akkamahadevi M Patil	Dharwad
8	Venkatesan K	Dharmapuri
9	Munirasu M	Dharmapuri
10	Balakrishna Murthy M R	Chintamani
11	Rudrappa Elalli	Chintamani
12	Ramesh Kumar B V	Chintamani
13	Narendra P	Chintamani

FINANCE MATTERS

GOWTHAMA & COMPANY
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

23/57, 41st Cross, East End C Main Road,
9th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore-560069
Ph : 26636042, 26656194
Fax No : 26651104

AME FOUNDATION
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2019

31.03.2018 Rs.	LIABILITIES	31.03.2019 Rs.P.	31.03.2018 Rs.	ASSETS	31.03.2019 Rs.P.
25,072,240	FUNDS As per Schedule I	23,763,970	9,117,985	FIXED ASSETS As per Schedule III	8,939,296
	CURRENT LIABILITIES & PROVISIONS			LOANS & ADVANCES/ DEPOSITS	
	As per Schedule II		12,874,301	As per Schedule IV	
650,000	Rental Advance	594,100	88,115	Fixed Deposits	12,818,651
41,391	Sundry Creditors For Expenses	-	54,500	Other Deposits	88,115
1,485,886	Unutilized Grants	4,820,486	471,493	Advances	19,629
91,179	Provisions	114,549		TDS Receivable	604,874
			4,734,302	CASH AND BANK BALANCES	
				As per Schedule V	6,822,540
27,340,697		29,293,105	27,340,697		29,293,105



CHAIRMAN

TREASURER

Place: Bangalore
Dated: 06.09.2019

EXAMINED AND FOUND CORRECT
FOR GOWTHAMA & COMPANY
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Firm No. 0059178

PUNDARIKAKSHA
PARTNER
Membership No. 214283



GOWTHAMA & COMPANY
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

23/57, 41st Cross, East End C Main Road,
9th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore-560069
Ph : 26636042, 26656194
Fax No : 26651104

AME FOUNDATION
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2019

31.03.2018 Rs.	EXPENDITURE	31.03.2019 Rs.P.	31.03.2018 Rs.	INCOME	31.03.2019 Rs.P.
8,495	To Bank Charges	6,344	854,580	By Rental Income	887,528
393,657	To Office expenses	243,542	68,053	By Donations- Leisa & Others	55,041
3,588,053	To Salary to employees	3,855,893			
2,245,159	To Consultancy Charges	3,920,465	1,200	By Terrace Gardening	10,065
205,641	To Rent, Electricity & Water Charges	85,073			
323,548	To Rates & Taxes	-	11,505,801	By Grants Utilized	14,098,030
122,390	To Homestead Gardens	267,814	475,093	By Institutional costs	762,705
404,030	To FFS Coordination & Field guidance	1,212,813	109,492	By Programme Guidance	333,571
648,776	To Travel & Conveyance	395,784			
501,370	To Capacity Building of Farmers	2,708,936			
986,282	To Critical Inputs & Support Cost	797,068		By Interest Income	
303,452	To Repairs & Maintenance	163,138	876,577	FD Interest	849,391
205,546	To Vehicle maintenance & Insurance	181,798	38,035	Accrued Interest	-
133,998	To Printing & Stationery	111,607	50,506	Bank FCRA Interest	128,207
25,680	To Postage & Courier	61,517	11,781	Interest in IT Refund	-
192,997	To Telephone & Internet	101,381	77,858	SB Interest	60,616
117,391	To Security Charges	93,404			
72,521	To Board Meeting Expenses	154,302			
397,845	To Meeting Expenses	241,413	5,363	By Excess of Expenditure over income	1,308,270
29,500	To Audit Fees	12,477			
314,405	To Insurance	266,905			
1,663,476	To Magazine Expenses (Production & translation)	1,857,398			
340,077	To Distribution Expenses	419,726			
5,000	To Membership & Subscription	7,370			
10,725	To Advertisement	-			
-	To Web Updating	104,612			
476,093	To Institutional Costs	762,705			
16,250	To Seed production & distribution	82,728			
324,256	To Depreciation	377,212			
14,056,613		18,493,425	14,056,613		18,493,425



Chairman
CHAIRMAN

Treasurer
TREASURER

Place: Bangalore
Dated: 06.09.2019

-3-

EXAMINED AND FOUND CORRECT
FOR GOWTHAMA & COMPANY
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Firm No. 005917S

Pundarikaksha
PUNDARIKAKSHA
PUNDARIKAKSHA
Membership No. 214283



AMEF OPERATIONAL AREAS

Central Unit

No. 204, 100 Feet Ring Road, 3rd Phase,
Banashankari 2nd Block, 3rd stage, Bangalore –
560 085

Ph: 080-26699512, 26699522, 26794922, Fax:
080-26699410

Email: amefbang@yahoo.co.in;

leisaindia@yahoo.co.in;

admin@amefound.org

Website: www.amefound.org;

www.leisaindia.org

Area Units

DHARMAPURI

5/1445, VP Singh Street,
Elakkiyampatti, Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu
Ph: 09842963832

Krishnan.j@amefound.org

DHARWAD

No.39, 1st Main, 2nd Cross
Behind Shri Ramakrishna Ashram
Channabasaveswar Nagar (C.B.Nagar)
Dharwad 580 007

Ph: 0836 –2472822

mallikarjun@amefound.org

CHINTAMANI

M.V. Ranganathan House (Rtd HM)
Opp: Pragathi Krishna Grameena Bank
Chintamani Main Road, Yeguvakote

Chintamani - 563146

Chikkaballapura District

Tel: 09959009561, **Email:**

rudrappa@amefound.org

TELANGANA

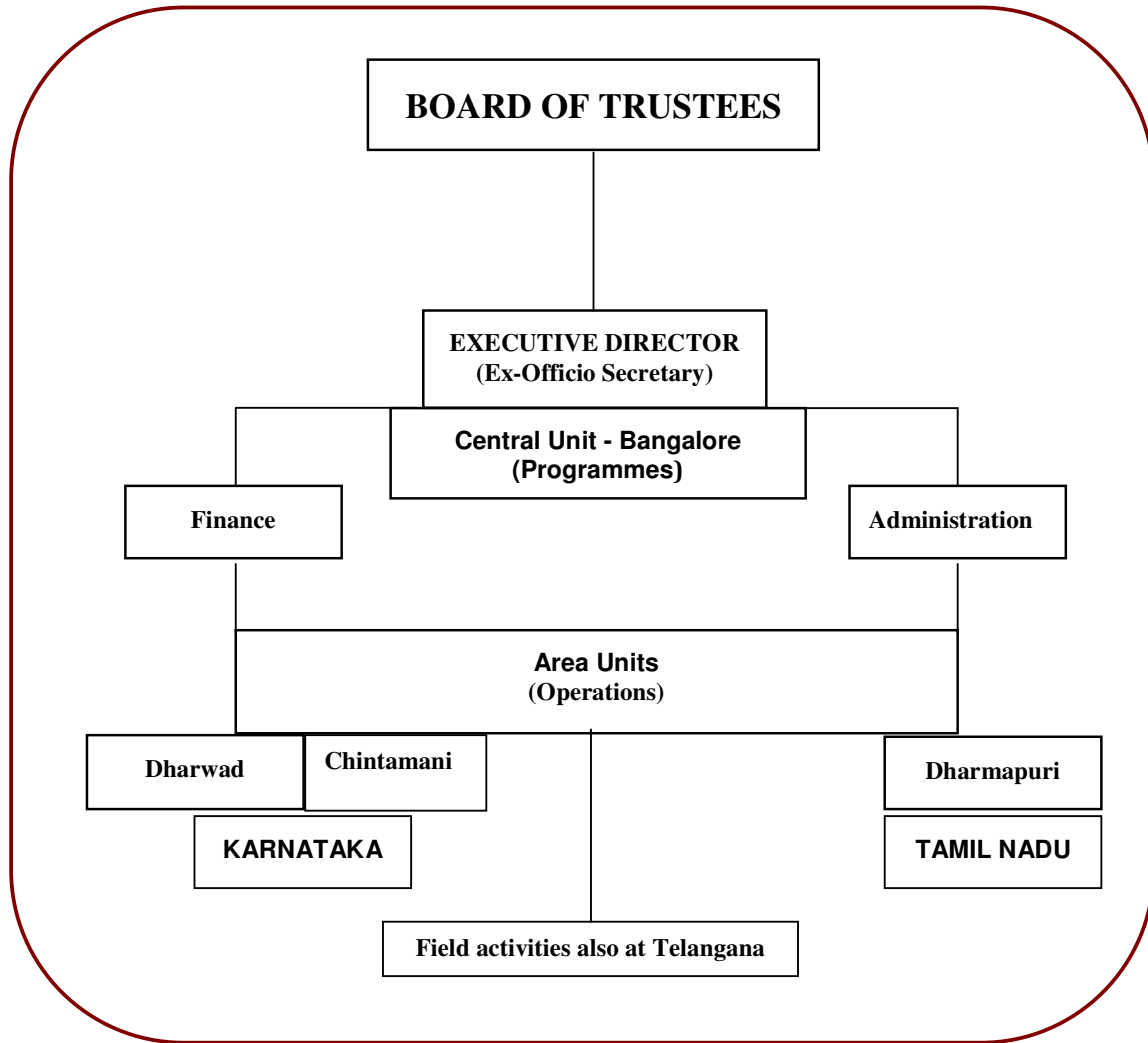
No. 18-394/1/1 MNC Colony
Pargi Road, Farooq Nagar (Mandal)
Shadnagar – 509216

Rangareddy District Telangana

Tel: 9959343727

Email: mallareddy@amefound.org

ORGANOGRAM OF AME FOUNDATION



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sri Chiranjiv Singh, *Chairman*

Former Development Commissioner of Karnataka and Additional Chief Secretary
Government of Karnataka

Dr. Vithal Rajan, *Vice Chairman*

Chairman, Governing Body, Confederation of Voluntary Associations, Hyderabad
Resigned w.e.f. January 2019

Padma Bhushan Dr. M. Mahadevappa

Advisor, JSS Rural Development Foundation, Mysore,
Member, ICAR Governing Body, New Delhi, Former Vice Chancellor, UAS, Dharwad
and Former Chairman, ASRB

Dr. N. G. Hegde

Trustee and Principal Adviser
BAIF Development Research Foundation

Dr. T. M. Thiyagarajan

Former Director / Dean, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

Prof. V. Veerabhadraiah

Former Director of Extension
University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore

Sri B. K. Shiva Ram, Treasurer

Former Administrative Officer, LIC of India
and Practicing Advocate

Dr. A. Rajanna

Former Director of Agriculture
Government of Karnataka

Dr. Venkatesh Tagat

Former Chief General Manager, NABARD

Dr. Smita Premchander

Founder Member & Hon. Chief Executive – Sampark

Prof. Ashoke Chatterjee

Former Director of National Institute of Design

Sri K. V. S. Prasad, Secretary

Executive Director