

*Zero Budget  
Natural Farming*



## Zero Budget Natural Farming

Creation of Viable and Sustainable Farm Livelihoods by promoting Natural Farming in Phase I, Phase II & Phase III Clusters.

### AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

- a. Improving the Livelihoods of Farmers with a special focus on small, marginal and landless poor farmers in the State.
- b. Profitable livelihoods from Agriculture and allied sectors. The Vision is that there should be no agriculture distress. Improving the Farm Livelihoods by reducing the cost of cultivation and more production.
- c. Reducing or zero usage of chemical fertilizers and chemical pesticides in order to protect the human health.
- d. Usage of cow dung, cow urine and plant extracts for improving the soil humus content which improves the soil texture, structure and microbial activity of the soil which directly improves the soil fertility there by increase in production.
- e. To address this, the Govt. of A.P has developed a comprehensive strategy. In the first phase, this is planned to implement in 1500 villages of 13 districts reaching out to 5,00,000 farmers. Work has already started in 131 Phase I Clusters and 268 Phase II Clusters in all the 13 districts of AP. This intensive phase will run for 5 years in these clusters.
- d. The project is being funded from the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) for the Phase I clusters and by Paramparagath Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) for Phase II clusters supported by Govt. of India.



### The key elements of strategy

- a. Climate resilient 'Zero budget Natural Farming' is an agro ecology approach as the core strategy.
- b. Knowledge dissemination is through Farmer to Farmer experience sharing.
- c. Extensive projection of Natural Farming Videos through Pico Projectors given to each Cluster Resource Person and Cluster Activist. ICTs in knowledge dissemination, adoption of natural farming practices, monitoring farmer practices, promoting traceability.
- d. Use of geo tagging technology through mobiles provided to each field functionaries so as to monitor, online recording of field data, ZBNF practices, easy review of higher authorities for constant enhancement of farmers to turn for Natural farming. Availability of real time data to the world.
- e. Building strong farmers institutions by Farmer SHGs, village federation of SHGs and farmer producer organizations for solidarity, knowledge dissemination, credit, risk management and for marketing of NF products

## Management

- a. Identification and training the resource persons from best practicing farmers in Non-Pesticide Management, Organic farming practices and climate resilient Zero Budget Natural Farming.
- b. Incentives, farmer facilitation with Natural Farming practitioners with in the cluster @ one Farmer Facilitator per 150 farmers and 10 per cluster by paying honorarium.
- c. In each cluster, one MPEO, 1 Cluster Activist (CA), 2 Community Resource Persons (CRPs) & 30 Master farmers will act as a team to promote Natural farming in the clusters.
- d. Farmer Experts who are the best practicing farmers work for 21 - 22 days in each round and train farmers on need based inputs i.e., Preparation of botanical extracts, Ghana/Drava Jeevamrutham etc. & promote NADEP, SRI cultivation, RFSA methods etc.
- e. New mode of extension with the help of Digital Green Foundation for production of Videos on botanical extracts, soil fertility management, success stories etc., and disseminate in villages with the help of Pico Projectors.
- f. Institution Building and capacity building by organizing farmers into RythuMitra Groups (RMGs), Village Level Federations to bring sustainable improvements in the quality of life of farmers in 131 Organic Clusters of A.P. through Orvakal Mandal Podupu Lakshmi Ikya Sangham (OMPLIS), Orvakal(V&M), Kurnool district. Monitoring the Program by DPMU (District Project Monitoring Unit) & SPMU(State Project Monitoring Unit).

## Financial Outlay

- a. The ongoing Organic farming 131 clusters Project is proposed to be implemented under RKVY with financial outlay of Rs.119.24 Crores.
- b. ZBNF new clusters are implemented under PKVY during 2017-18 with financial outlay of Rs.94.24 Crores
- c. The identification of new clusters for the year 2018-19 is in progress@ 5 villages per each phase I & II clusters, in principle 6000 clusters are approved by GoI. Budget is yet to be released by GoI

## Summary of the activities

**Capacity Building:** Capacity building of Resource Persons and Farmer Experts. Development of Social Capital for scaling up of program. Each cluster is expected to generate 200 best practitioners cum master trainers and over 5 years this number will touch around 60,000 master trainers. This human resource is critical for scaling up.

**Institution Building:** 20,000 men SHGs will be formed covering 2,00,000 farmers. In turn the 10 to 30 SHGs in a village, will be federated into Village Farmers Federation. These Federations will form into Farmer Producer Organizations.

**On Farm Farmer Trainings/ Method Demonstrations at cluster level:** Best Seed to Seed Natural Farming practitioners who are now Community Resource Persons stay in the village/cluster itself for 23 days a month. Video dissemination, Farmer Field Schools, Farmer books, Crop wise protocols and Crop cards form integral part of extension.

**Organic Certification:** Each cluster will be divided into 3 Groups with maximum 500 farmers and these groups will be arranged 3rd party Grower Group Certification by an external Certification agency so as to access good market price to their produce.

**ZBNF input shops @** one per village by a ZBNF practitioner to provide need based inputs like Ghanajeevamrutham, Drava jeevamrutham, Panchagavya, Agniasthram, Brahmaasthram, Sprayers, Border crops, Trap crops, Yellow, White Sticky traps, Pheromone traps, local vegetable seeds, pulveriser for making plant extracts etc.

**Cattleshed lining with Urine Collection tanks:** Farmers who are already having Cows and practising ZBNF will be supported for Cattle Shed lining with Urine Collection Tanks.

**Custom Hiring Centre:** Custom Hiring Centres (CHC) are on 50 percent subsidy to the individual beneficiary /attachment to NPM shop.

**Promotion of POP Models to convert:** Agricultural Labour into farmers. POP is a ultra-poor strategy which ensures an income of Rs.10,000/- per month from their farm

**ToT on ZBNF by Sri. Subash Palekar:** Regional level TOTs are organised on ZBNF to intensify Natural Farming practices in 13 Districts of AP by Sri. Subhash Palekar, who is well known for his commitment to empower farmers in distress. About 30,000 farmers are trained on different ZBNF practices. The Mega trainings were organised at Kakinada, Tirupati and Guntur. Each training consisting of 9000 to 10,000 ZBNF participants.

**Livelihood promotion in clusters by providing financial assistance :** Livelihood promotion fund limited to Rs.5000/- per farmer spread over a period of 3 years with 50percent contribution from farmers to utilize for drought proofing, land development, purchase of desi cows, irrigation, mechanization, post-harvest practices etc

**ICT:** A comprehensive I.C.T support for farmer database, e-Tracking progress on adoption of ZBNF practices, Enabling traceability - certification, performance monitoring of functionaries, e Marketing, Geo-mapping will be developed.

**Facilitation Support:** NGOs are involved to play a role as facilitating agent in planning process, action plan preparation and monitoring, linkages with various department and converging schemes, capacity building process and documentation etc.

## Expected Outcomes

- ★ Promoting agriculture in harmony with Nature
- ★ Reducing the cost of cultivation
- ★ Reducing risks / Reducing Health hazards
- ★ Increasing yields, both in the short run and the long run
- ★ Increasing price realizations for farmers
- ★ Enhancing soil fertility, soil biology continuously
- ★ Promoting bio diversity
- ★ Enhancing resilience to climate change
- ★ Healthy food free from chemical residues for all consumers
- ★ Employment opportunity in villages.
- ★ In addition, there are benefits by way of premium pricing for chemical free produce, improved soil health, climate change resilience, consumer health
- ★ Improving the quality and quantity of the production
- ★ Improving the keeping quality of the produce
- ★ Sustainable agriculture for the years to come

