

## **Proceedings of Workshop on Vegetable Initiative for Urban Clusters (VIUC)- Baseline Survey, Farmers Cluster and Tie up with Aggregators, held on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2011 at NCUI Complex, New Delhi.**

The Workshop was held on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2011 at NCUI Building which was attended by senior officers from Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Government of India, Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) & State Governments, representatives from ICAR, FICCI, Industry and other stake holders. The list of participants is annexed.

### **Presentations made**

The workshop comprised of three Sessions including Inaugural Session. The following presentations were made during the Workshop:

1. Vegetable Initiative for Urban Clusters, by Shri Sanjeev Chopra, Joint Secretary and Mission Director (NHM).
2. Role of SFAC in Vegetable Initiative for Urban Clusters, by Shri Pravesh Sharma, Managing Director, SFAC.
3. Vegetable Cultivation for Urban Clusters, by Dr. P.M. Singh, Principle Scientist, IIVR, Varanasi.
4. Sustainable Options for Urban Farming, by Dr. Priyanie Amerasinghe, RAUF, IWMI, Hyderabad.
5. Role of Market Aggregator-National Vegetable Initiative, by Shri Baskar Reddy, FICCI, New Delhi.
6. Development of Fresh Fruits & Vegetables, Pre cooked / cooked-Mobile Vendors, by Shri Ashok Kapoor, Sampoon Samridhi, Gurgaon.
7. Redefining Vegetable Supply Chain, by Shri Kaushlendra, Samriddhi, Patna.
8. Vegetable Initiative for Urban Cluster, by Shri S.K Goel, Principal Secretary (Agriculture), Maharashtra.
9. Vegetable Cultivation in Peri Urban Areas of Kerala, by Dr. K. Prathapan, Mission Director, SHM, Kerala.
10. Vegetable Initiative in Kolkata Metro, by Dr. P.K. Pramanick, Mission Director, SHM, West Bengal.

### **National Level Presentations**

Shri Sanjeev Chopra, Joint Secretary & Mission Director (NHM) highlighted that vegetable production is an important area, which was not given due credit for holistic development, so far. It is a commodity which experience sharp fluctuation in prices, unlike other commodities like cereals, sugar, pulses and milk. There has been sharp fluctuation in the price of onions during the last Kharif season. With changing food habits, there is more consumption of vegetables in the cities and metros. Moreover, with increasing level of awareness about health, the demand for good quality residue free vegetables is increasing. In line with these demands, the VIUC Scheme has been launched under which almost all activities relating to supply chain of vegetables can be taken up. He solicited the active participation of the Industry in facilitating supply chain management.

Shri Pravesh Sharma, MD SFAC highlighted that three key issues, viz Investment, Technology and Marketing will have an important bearing on the VIUC Scheme. There are 8-10 good models of cluster formation and linking them to Aggregators. The role of privatization in linking the producer directly to the market is crucial. He added that SFAC would play the role of facilitator both at the pre- implementation and implementation phase of the Scheme. Pre implementation activities envisages signing of MoU with

States, finalization of targets, selection of location, identification of Resource Agency(RA) for implementation, tripartite MoU between SFAC, State and RA duly specifying outputs and milestones, and transfer of funds to SFAC by States. Similarly, during the implementation phase, SAFC would facilitate organizing inception workshop at District level, roll out institution building modules by RA, training & capacity building for all stake holders, monitoring and evaluation services, market aggregation & venture capital assistance and joint review at six monthly intervals.

Dr. P. M Singh, Principal Scientist, IIVR highlighted the status of vegetable production, R&D, including quality aspects of vegetables for international market. He also highlighted the problems associated with peri- urban vegetable cultivation in terms of presence of pathogenic organisms in waste water used for irrigating vegetables, contamination of crops and disease associated with poor sanitation during post harvest management. He mentioned that 423 vegetable varieties of 24 vegetable crops have been recommended for cultivation by IIVR including 263 open pollinated varieties, 114 hybrids and 46 OP/ hybrids resistant to biotic and abiotic stress. Various aspects relating to nurseries, INM/IPM, protected cultivation, organic cultivation, and aspects relating to PHM and processing were also presented. He stressed the need for educating both growers and consumers about the use of pesticides in vegetables.

During the discussions on the presentation by IIVR, Director of Horticulture, J&K mentioned that the farmers have their own limitation in irrigation resources of good quality water. Farmers need to be educated on quality standards and viable solutions need to be evolved in consultation with SAUs. The Technology Document for specific vegetables for different cities needs to be prepared. In this connection, it was clarified by Dr. S.K. Goel, Principal Secretary (Agriculture), Maharashtra mentioned that IIVR and public hybrid are limited.

Dr. K. Prathapan, Mission Director, SHM Kerala mentioned that under the AICRP on Vegetables, almost all the State Agricultural Universities(SAUs) are developing package of practices as well as hybrid seed material which is suitable for the particular State. Hence, their inputs need to be taken. Under NHM, sufficient good seed infrastructure facilities have been developed in Kerala. Further, there is no shortage of hybrid seeds in the State.

Dr. R.P Gupta, Director, NHRDF mentioned that in many States there is shortage of hybrid seeds of vegetables under the public sector. He also reiterated that SAUs need to be consulted with regard to State / location specific package of practices. He mentioned that NHRDF can assist the States in vegetable seed production, demonstrations and HRD under the Scheme.

Shri Sitaram Jat, Deputy Director, SHM, Rajasthan mentioned about the need for proper linkage between the farmer and the suppliers of breeder seeds, particularly since most of the hybrid seeds are being produced and supplied by the Private players.

Director of Horticulture, Tripura mentioned that there is no SAU and specific Institute on vegetables in the State. During May- June there is water stress and during July there are heavy rains in the State. Hence, location specific technology is needed. He further stressed the need for technological intervention for vegetable cultivation particularly for protected cultivation. Dr. P.M. Singh, IIVR informed that ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region Tripura Centre, Lumbuchheria is working on agriculture and horticulture crops.

Dr. P.K. Pramanick Mission Director, SHM West Bengal solicited some intervention for making available private sector vegetable hybrid seeds to the farmers, particularly those seeds which are not certified.

Director of Horticulture, Himachal Pradesh mentioned that varieties for protected cultivation of vegetables are not available in the State.

Shri Bijay Kumar, MD, National Horticulture Board (NHB) mentioned that all commodities do not require cold chain facility. Presently tomatoes are being sent from Mumbai to Amritsar. No refrigeration is required during winter months. Moreover, refrigerated van may not be an ideal solution. He stressed the need to remove the bottlenecks in entry of vegetables into metros which require clearance form APMC. There is need to have farmers markets.

Shri Suresh Kumar, Ex Principle Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra suggested the need to have sound publicity on the activities and targets of the VIUC Scheme. He also suggested the need for selling vegetables as nutritional value packs rather than as a commodity. He also cautioned against glut and surpluses of vegetables.

### **State Presentations**

Dr. S.K Goel, Principal Secretary (Agriculture), Government of Maharashtra, in his presentation highlighted the present situation of marketing and sourcing of Vegetables in Mumbai. He mentioned that the total area under vegetable cultivation in Maharashtra is 4.1 lakh ha producing 49.87 lakh MT of vegetables. The present supply of vegetable to Mumbai city is about 6 lakh MT from within Maharashtra State against the requirement of 10 lakh MT for a population of about 100 lakh people. The remaining 4 lakh MT comes from outside the State. Thane and Raigad are the two main districts identified for production enhancement by bringing in additional 3000 ha under vegetables. Since, Nasik and Pune are already producing substantial quantity of vegetables; efforts will have to be made to augment the supply chain infrastructure in these districts. He observed that in order to make visible impact, it will be necessary to pool the resources from Schemes like NHM and RKVY.

Dr. K. Prathapan, MD, SHM Kerala explained that Kerala has five Corporations and 60 Municipalities. The maximum population is in Thiruvananthapuram followed by Cochin. Since Thiruvananthapuram is located in the Southern portion of the State, they wish to take up Cochin as the central point for developing vegetable clusters, both in the North and Southern districts. Perishable Cargo Centre at CIAL, Cochin is working on hub and spoke model for fruits and vegetables. A project for Rs. 3924.31 lakh has been prepared, involving Govt. assistance of Rs. 2085.56 lakh and beneficiary contribution of Rs. 1838.75 lakh.

Dr. P.K.Pramanik, Mission Director, SHM, West Bengal mentioned that one tenth of vegetable production in the country is produced by West Bengal and productivity is 17.2 MT/ha against the National average 16.2MT/ha. He highlighted the selection of clusters in and around Kolkata in the Districts of North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Hugli and Howrah. A project proposed for Rs. 594.67 lakh has been prepared for 2011-12. He requested for availing the services of SFAC for Baseline Survey and linking farmer to aggregators.

## **Role of Aggregators**

Dr. Priyane Amerasinghe in her presentation explained the role played by RUAF Foundation through the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) in mobilizing the farmers in and around Hyderabad and Bangalore in promoting vegetable cultivation. She highlighted that substantial quantity of vegetables being consumed in cities like Shanghai (China), Dhar (Senegal), Havana (Cuba) are being produced in the peri urban areas. Intervention of RUAF has helped to enlarge the vegetable basket from 11 to 22 in Hyderabad within a period of six months, which also helped in enhancing income of farmers on a sustainable basis. In the case of Karnataka, a systematic approach for production of vegetables like carrots by Dhan Foundation in Magadi town brought about remarkable change in the economy of the farmers. HRD, demonstration and record keeping also played an important role in the success of the project.

Shri Baskar Reddy, FICCI highlighted different models of existing Value chain financing viz. producer driven, consumer driven, facilitator driven and integrated model which are under operation in different countries and the scope of developing some model on similar lines for the vegetable sectors in India. He suggested that private sector players like Mandi Fresh, Spot Exchange, IFFCO Rural Cooperatives and Retail Chain could be involved to address upstream and downstream linkages.

Shri Ashok Kapoor of Sampoon Samridhi, Gurgaon explained about their efforts in creating a model for supply of fresh fruits & vegetables, pre-cooked/ semi-cooked food through mobile vendors in the country with the objective of creating complete prosperity for the hawker. They have availed the technical expertise of agencies like Cross Tree Techno Vendors to develop mobile vending carts which are suitable for door step delivery of different products including fresh fruits and vegetables. Based on the feedback from the hawkers, they have been modifying the design of the mobile vending carts. Their intervention has resulted in issuing license for 16000 hawkers in Delhi, Gurgaon and Nagpur Municipal Corporations.

Shri Kaushalendra, Samridhii, a joint initiative of Kushalya Foundation and Knits Green Pvt. Ltd. explained about the functioning of the vegetable supply chain in and around Patna. Founded by professionals from IIM, Ahmedabad, the goal of the Foundation is to create gainful and dignified employment opportunities for the families dependent on agriculture sector. Presently, they are working in five districts of Bihar, viz. Patna, Nalanda, Jehanabad, Nawada and Bhojpur and Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. Their intervention has helped to create an Association of more than 500 vendors and 3000 farmers. Tie ups has been made with ATMA, NABARD and Women Development Cooperation (WDC). Farmers' income could be increased by 1.25 to 1.5 times and assured income of Rs. 3000 to Rs. 8000 is available to the vendors. They propose to expand their operation to other States besides increasing its presence in Bihar vegetable market. They also propose to launch Green Carts as a company operated cart in some of the townships. Besides, they propose to appoint a master franchise in every major city of Bihar who will be responsible for all the operations starting from procurement, processing and selling through Samridhii Green Carts.

## **General Response**

The participants appreciated the efforts being made by Samridhii. Dr. S.K Goel, Principal Secretary (Agriculture), Govt. of Maharashtra mentioned that Samridhii is addressing all the aspects required by an Aggregator, which need to be followed by the large players.

Representative of Reliance Fresh mentioned that each Aggregator has its own model. However, they are finding it difficult to offer a fixed assured price to the producer.

Director of Horticulture, J& K mentioned that private representatives have not come forward in the state for providing 100% subsidy for transporting vegetables. On this, it was clarified that subsidy is available to private entrepreneurs for ref. van.

Deputy Director of Horticulture, Andhra Pradesh suggested the need for providing assistance for vegetable seed production under pandals. In this connection, it was clarified that it could be covered under Protected Cultivation component of Scheme.

Representative of Haryali Kissan mentioned that they are operating 1500 outlets for vegetables in Haryana. Land has been identified for additional 84 locations. Facilities like pre cooling, pack houses are available with them, which can be availed by any one.

Representative of Metro Cash and Carry, Mumbai informed that there is need to give flexibility to locate collection, grading and packing centres.

Representative from Mandi Fresh mentioned that they are operating a web based marketing system in Gurgaon. They propose to avail GAP certification.

Representative from Shanders Agri Enterprises (Private) Ltd, Hyderabad mentioned that they will be participating in the Scheme in Hyderabad.

Representative from Samriddhi suggested the need for providing collaterals for bank finance of ventures under vegetable initiative.

### **Observations of Secretary (A&C)**

Shri P.K Basu, Secretary (A&C) participated in the deliberations during interaction with the Industry representatives and Aggregators. He made the following observations:

- The Vegetable Initiative Scheme for Urban Cluster is a new intervention which is consequent to the high inflation of vegetable prices during 2010. The Scheme has wide flexibility. Besides, Schemes of NHM, HMNEH and RKVY could be availed to supplement the missing links and upscaling the intervention.
- The available time for implementing the Scheme is short; hence the State Governments will have to move quickly to approve the project by the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC).
- There should be frequent dialogue between the stake holders. SFAC should coordinate the meeting between the Aggregators and the State Governments to finalize the Aggregators in each State.
- State Governments needs to identify few key vegetables in which they would like to intervene in each city.

### **Salient points which emerged from the deliberations**

Important points which emerged from the deliberations during the Workshop are as under:

1. The Scheme on Vegetable Initiative for Urban Clusters (VIUC), launched with an outlay of Rs. 300.00 crore during 2011-12 need to be implemented with the active participation of all the stake holders viz. Research Institutes, State implementing Agencies, Aggregators, Industry and Market players.

2. The VIUC Scheme has ample choice of interventions, which along with the support of other Schemes like NHM, HMNEH and RKVY could be availed.
3. State can avail assistance under scheme depending upon the requirement and not necessarily utilize 75% of outlay on production relating aspects. A holistic approach need to be adopted.
4. Although the Scheme has been presently approved for implementation during 2011-12, it could be extended to the XII Plan depending in the performance and outcome during 2011-12.
5. Time lines need to be adhered to strictly, so that the Scheme is implemented effectively and results derived by the end of the financial year.
6. Success of the Scheme, to a great extent, will depend on the consolidation of Aggregators.
7. Each State need to conduct base line survey to identify the existing position with regard to area, production, productivity, PHM infrastructure and marketing facility and requirement of vegetable in each City/ Metro.
8. The information on market arrival and price should form one of the basis of the base line data for the particularly city. The Nodal Officer should maintain a close liaison with the concerned Market Committee.
9. IIVR, Varanasi and the AICRPs on Vegetables located in the State Agricultural Universities in respective States have developed package of practices for the vegetables in their locality, which need to be promoted through the extension machinery.
10. Seeds and planting material form an important element in the Scheme. Presently, the Private sector is a major player in promoting hybrid vegetables. Such seeds are not certified and tend to be costly also. A mechanism need to be evolved to certify such seeds for enabling its distribution to the farmers at reasonable rates. A Committee will be constituted for this purpose with the involvement of ICAR and State Government.
11. SFAC will facilitate in coordinating the interaction between Aggregators and the State Governments. The State Government can also avail the expertise of SFAC in operationalising the Scheme in the respective States. The State Government can also avail services of NHRDF for vegetable seed production, organising demonstrations and training of farmers in vegetable production.
12. The choice of selection of the metro/ city is left to the State Government. Once the city is selected, the State Government should ensure proper tie up for steady supply of vegetables to the particular city.
13. The Scheme also provides for Organic and GAP certification, which needs to be availed for supply of good quality vegetable to the consumer.
14. The role of Industry players and Aggregators being crucial, they need to identify the particular city in which they would like to operate. They may go thought the Scheme guidelines thoroughly before getting involved in the same. Moreover, they need to provide an end to end solution on a large scale.
15. Samriddhii have developed a good system for providing support to the growers as well as the vegetable vendors in and around Patna city, the model of which could be replicated on a larger scale in other cities.

**Annexure****List of Participants in the Workshop on implementation of National Vegetable Initiative for Urban Clusters held on 11th April, 2011 at New Delhi**

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