





**ACHIEVING
SUSTAINABLE
FARMING
INNOVATIVELY**

DHARWAD, KARNATAKA

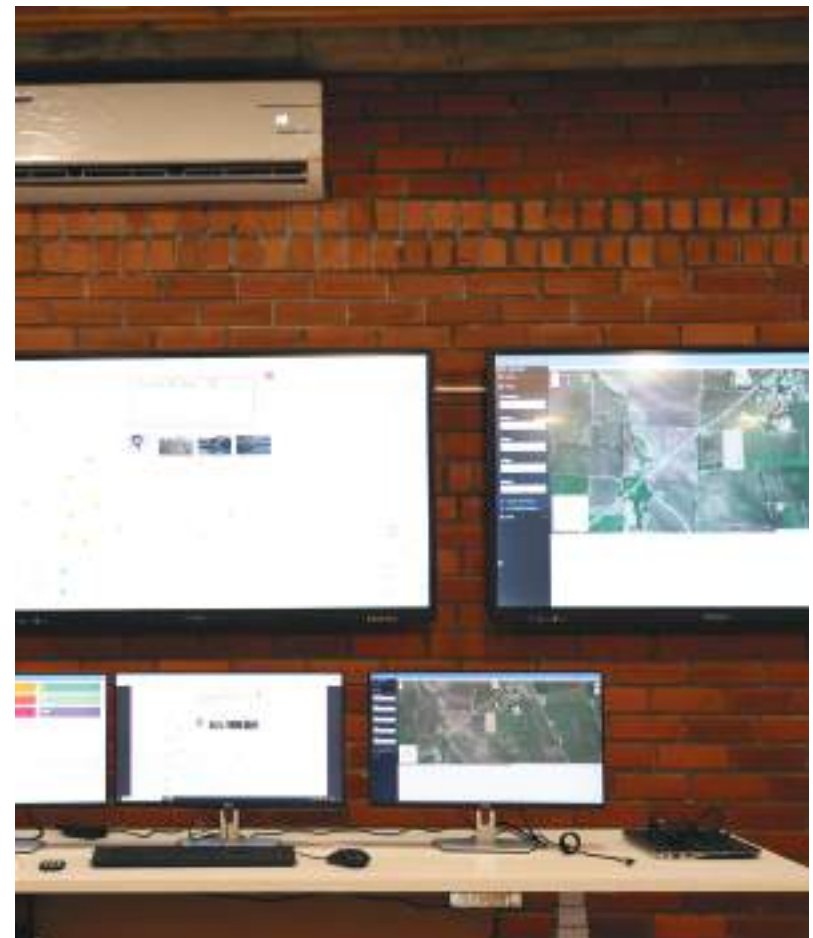
Development of Farm Ponds, Farmer Producer Organisations by putting technology in use

Each year, farmers in rain-fed areas face several adversities such as climate variability, crop failure, non-remunerative prices and lack of water during the cropping season. Nearly 90% of Karnataka’s Rabi cultivable land is in the Northern regions of the State, which are amongst the worst affected by drought¹ and water scarcity. Some of the talukas in Northern Karnataka have been under ‘severe drought’.

This innovative initiative seeks to harness technology and banks financing Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) of farmers to scale farm ponds program across North Karnataka region, to usher water security in drought hit regions.

Water harvesting - a low cost alternative for irrigation, is one of the key adaptation strategies for successful rain-fed farming. Water harvesting is a directly productive form of soil and water conservation, which can improve the yield. To promote and nurture sustainable farming, Dharwad District Administration, Deshpande Foundation (NGO), SBI, NABARD, FPO and other corporate stakeholders partnered to create innovative and replicable models of water harvesting.

Farm Ponds was one of the solutions. The Farm Ponds program is supplemented by the FPOs. They were encouraged to leverage the technical knowledge through Agri Advisory services powered by Rural Transformation



¹<https://ksdma.karnataka.gov.in/storage/pdf-files/Rabi%202018%20drought.pdf>



Technology Center (RTTC) and implement innovative farm practices from the stage of land preparation to post harvesting, introduction of integrated farming systems, agroforestry, natural farming, soil testing, etc. Both FPO & the farmers were empowered with business planning & market linkages to realise the best possible price by avoiding middlemen.

Kalmeshwara Farmer Producer Company Ltd. (KFPCL), the body undertaking the project, effectively serves farmers through inputs and output sales along with extending support in agriculture extension work as well.

FINAL OUTCOMES

- Construction of farm ponds
- Procurement of input tools
- Seed production
- Commodity trading
- Aggregation and storage of produce
- Quality control
- Marketing to institutional buyers
- Connecting farmers to the Government, Agri, and Horticulture Department

IN CONCLUSION

This easily replicable initiative is structured in such a way that any institution or Government body can adopt this and start implementing it with immediate effect. A program tool-kit along with Standard Operating Procedures (SoP) to implement the farm pond program has been created. It will enable replication of this model.

The aim is to scale the Farm Ponds programme by leveraging the Technology and JLGs to reach over 1 lakh Farm Ponds over the next 5 years. The farm pond funding will move to a model where farmers contribute 100% of the farm pond construction cost and bank loans. The FPO will deliver farm pond construction as a service. The objective is to create farmer entrepreneurs who are supported by the ecosystem of finance and Government/Non-Government Institutions in the entire process.

Thus, the model is replicable as well as sustainable.

RURAL TRANSFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTRE (RTTC) AND ITS ROLE

Identifying Farm Pond location using land elevation with satellite imagery.

Consolidated status updates from the field.

Identifying the shortest route to initiate the pond construction.

Detecting farming activity and cropping patterns over years using satellite imagery.

Inlet & outlet for the pond so that only water will go into it.

Establishing farm gate market linkage for a filtered list of crop sources to lift the farm produce.

