

Water User Association (WUA) for managing the system including sharing of water and collection of service charges for water and electricity.

Under the CIS, cultivation of low water intensive crops is allowed. To ensure energy and water use efficiency, drip irrigation system is being promoted.

A typical CIS designed and implemented by the project with the assistance of International Development Enterprises (India) - an organisation with expertise in microirrigation - includes borewell, pumping system, a main pipeline which distributes water to the fields, a storage tank for each farmer and a gravity based low-cost drip irrigation system. Each borewell is serviced by an individual transformer installed under the OYT scheme of BESCO. This eliminates chances of theft of power.



Smt. Bhagyamma, with brinjal grown under drip irrigation system, Kabbigere (Koratagere)

Crops grown: 12 crops, mostly vegetables, were grown by farmers with most farmers growing more than one crop to contain risk. The crops grown included vegetables viz., tomato, brinjal, bitter gourd, ridge gourd, french beans, ladies finger, chillies, and greens; oil seeds and pulses viz., sunflower, cowpea and groundnut, and a flower, i.e., aster.

Microfinance: Bharatiya Samruddhi Finance Ltd (BSFL), a subsidiary of BASIX, a leading NGO in the development sector, has been introduced to the project area to provide micro-credit facilities to the farmers. Apart from crop loans of Rs. 2000/- each to 25 farmers, BSFL has also extended agri-investment loans upto a maximum of Rs. 7000 per farmer to 35 farmers, to enable them to install water storage tanks and drip irrigation systems. Credit has been extended to these farmers through 'Joint Liability Groups' comprising of 4-5 farmers. This has eliminated the need to mortgage land or property as security. It is heartening to mention here that after the first crop, the farmers have repaid the crop loans fully. 2 farmers have also fully pre-paid the agri-investment loans.



▲ Borewell with OYT Transformer, Kabbigere (Koratagere)



▲ Storage tank in Rangaiah, a landless person's fields, Kabbigere (Koratagere)

During the summer of 2004, the project operationalised the community irrigation system in 2 villages of Koratagere cluster. 38 farmers belonging to 5 Water User Associations in Kabbigere and Chikkannahalli villages took up cropping under these systems. The project facilitated design and implementation of the irrigation system through a participatory process involving the WUAs and experts. The project also facilitated frequent interaction of WUA members with crop experts to enable proper selection and cultivation of crops.

Equity and Empowerment: The project has adopted a strategy of ensuring equity and economic empowerment of rural people through Community irrigation systems. Under CIS, all the households in the village are provided with access to irrigation upto half an acre of land, thereby creating income earning opportunities to even poor people. Of the 38 farmers who have taken up cropping, 32 farmers i.e., 84 % of farmers never had access to irrigation earlier.

The project has also created economic opportunities to even the landless through water rights. Shri. Rangaiah, a landless person from Kabbigere has utilised his share of water and cultivated half an acre of land taken on long lease. He has grown tomato, ladies finger and bitter gourd with his share of water.