

BAIF INSTITUTE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT – KARNATAKA

BAIF Institute For Rural Development – Karnataka (BIRD-K) with its headquarters at Tiptur in Tumkur district of Karnataka, formally established in 1980, is implementing an integrated rural development programme spread over 22 districts, benefitting 94,830 families from 3596 villages.

The dairy development programme which has demonstrated the potential to be operated as a business model, is being implemented in 20 districts through 95 cattle development centres, benefitting 84727 families from 1627 villages.

The integrated watershed development programme covers 14859 ha, benefitting 4664 families from 40 villages through 18 micro watersheds. Farm pond networking in the watershed area of Hassan district has demonstrated a decentralised approach for effective recharging of ground water and revival of rivulets. With the support of the Government of Karnataka and the local Gram Panchayat, an innovative drinking water project through roof top rain water harvesting, has established a close bond between the community and the Gram Panchayat to initiate various development activities. Promotion of safe drinking water has led to the control of diseases caused by the presence of excessive fluoride in ground water table.

Tree-based farming systems popularly known as *wadi*, benefitting 10151 families from 390 villages, is being implemented on 4946 ha through mango, coconut, cashewnut, tamarind, guava, sapota and custard apple orchards. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam visited the agri-horti-forestry programme at Manjunathpura block in Tumkur district in January 2006 and highlighted the relevance of this holistic programme for poverty alleviation. Promotion of rural non-farm enterprises and value addition to agricultural produce have generated gainful employment for landless and small holders. Rural tourism is being promoted through local handicrafts and hotels serving traditional food. Greenbelt development has made a deep impact in the industrial surroundings of Gokak Mills of Tata Group at Gokak and at the Indian Aluminium Company, Belgaum.

A unique approach to village self-governance popularly known as *Navachetana* has made good progress through the promotion of *Yuvachetana* which aims at leadership development among youth. Specially designed training courses for socio-economic and spiritual development of the youth have made a significant change in their attitude towards community development and volunteerism. People's Organisations at various levels are playing an important role in ensuring the sustainability of the development process. *Siri Samruddhi*, a journal, provides useful information on sustainable agricultural practices to farmers and development organisations. The training and demonstration campuses at Lakkihalli, Sureshettikoppa and Myllanahalli provide critical inputs to support the field programme. Sharing of hands-on experience by successful participant families is the speciality, to impart best practices at the training centre managed by the farmers at Sureshettikoppa in Dharwad district. Research studies on jatropha, pongamia, simarouba, tamarind, Indian gooseberry, cashew, coconut, silkworm rearing in sheds and effect of rain and borewell water for growing mulberry silk, are conducted at Lakkihalli with encouraging results.

