

Annual Report 2023-24



**Deccan Development
Society, Telangana, India**

2023 marked the international year of millets, with

Notable Citations in 2023:

- **FAO:** N. Anjamma, Senior Seedkeeper and Karyakarta has been featured on FAO Website as part of IYOM 2023 initiative to document successful millet stories. You can read the story [here](#).
- **LUSH Spring Prize:** DDS Sanghams have been shortlisted for 'Established Award' category for LUSH Spring Prize 2023. The profile can be found [here](#).
- **Channel News Asia:** Millet Sisters have been featured in a special docu-series by Channel news Asia 'Forgotten Palates: The Search for Resilient Crops'. You can view the episode [here](#).
- **AFSA:** The Central Seed Bank of DDS at Machnoor has been profiled on the website of Alliance of Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), an internationally reputed organization, as an inspiring success story for Farmer Managed Seed Systems. The profile can be viewed [here](#).
- **Junge Welte:** The Annual Mobile Biodiversity Festival and Community Media Trust have found a special mention in Junge Welte, a progressive German New Daily. The article can be viewed [here](#).
- **The Wire:** The 'Millet Revolution' of Sangham sisters has been profiled by Mr Indra Shekhar Singh, prominent agriculture journalist, on The Wire. The article can be viewed [here](#).
- **Down to Earth:** DDS Sanghams and their long journey have been chronicled through Down to Earth, published by Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in a short video documentary. The videos can be viewed [here](#).
- **The Quint:** General Narasamma, Co-Manager of Sangham Radio and India's first dalit woman radio producer has been profiled in a special video bulletin that can be viewed [here](#).

Special Anniversaries of 2023!



The year has also marked two special anniversaries as Deccan Development Society has turned 40 on September 2nd and Sangham Radio has turned 15 on October 15th!



The 40th anniversary of Deccan Development Society was celebrated joyously with older and younger sangham members coming together for a special event at DDS Office in Pastapur. Senior sangham members like Chandramma, Swaroopamma and Anjamma, who have now become renowned with their work with the community have reflected on how they have evolved from being confined in their homes to being respected village elders due to the strength provided by sanghams. Younger members also pledged to take this zeal forward for years to come.



The fifteenth anniversary of Sangham Radio was again a special celebration as it also marks the beginning of Community Radios in India. Sri B. Narsing Rao, National Award-Winning Renowned Filmmaker, Sri M.B. Patil, Rtd Program Director, Doordarshan Gulbarga and Prof. Kanchan K. Malik, Faculty fellow at UNESCO Community Media, Hyderabad Central University, participated in the event as Special Guests.

The event saw active participation from nearly 100 rural women, DDS staff members and journalists. Community elders and local artists were felicitated in this event for their long-standing contributions to the radio. Along with them, Sangham Radio managers Ms. General Narsamma and Ms. AlgoleNarsamma were also felicitated by guests for their tireless efforts in pushing the radio forward for 15 years. Speaking on this occasion, Ms, AlgoleNarsamma said “Our grandmothers and elders have passed on valuable knowledge on many things like farming, food, environment, health in many conversations but they were often ignored as unimportant. When an outsider visits here, they only listen to what they want to know. But on our radio, these women talk to their heart’s content. We are proud that our radio could offer such a space and since its inception we have thousands of songs, stories and interviews in our archive.”

A special publication ‘Sounds of Soil’ documenting local songs and stories from Sangham farms was released by Sri B. Narsing Rao garu. The objective of the publication was to highlight the local knowledge carried in these folk songs to a wider audience through translations. The booklet can be viewed [here](#) and the album is available [here](#).

On this occasion, A crowdfunding campaign to digitize Sangham Radio was launched by Sri M.B.Patil. This campaign aims to raise enough funds for necessary equipment, infrastructure and training for the radio station to take the radio online and adapt itself in the new digital age and widen its reach.

A Year of Events!

The year also saw a host of special events that brought sangham farmers together with a myriad of stakeholders from conscious consumers to policy makers to politicians. Firstly, the year kickstarted with **23rd edition of Annual Mobile Biodiversity Festival** which toured around 24 villages for a month. The festival toured around 24 villages, punctuated by large mandal level jatharas, grand opening and closing ceremonies. The festival at levels involved participation of sangham farmers, village households, sarpanches, local officials and KVK scientists. There were also visitors from districts, states and countries who have traveled far distances to witness the festival after hearing about it from their friends or through the media. Dr. Devinder Sharma, eminent agriculture policy activist, attended the closing ceremony as the guest of honor and was a special highlight to the festival, crediting DDS women to be at the forefront of millet revival in the country.



On the occasion of **World Seed Day** on 26th April, a special event was organized in DDS where village karyakartas showcased the range of seed varieties saved in their villages to press and declared on agenda of seed sovereignty. There was a display of more than 50 varieties of rabi and kharif seeds, mostly of millets, pulses and oilseeds. Farmers released a press release stating the necessity of women's seed sovereignty while promoting millets in IYOM 2023.



On June 18th, Sangham Women took to the streets of Zahirabad for a special **Rally for Millets**, commemorating the International year of Millets 2023. Nearly 100 women farmers, Zahirabad youth

and DDS staff members participated in the rally and a special meeting held at DDS Campus in Pastapur.



The year also saw special events to bring urban conscious consumers closer to the traditional crops and foods of sangham farmers. As part of this, DDS held **Millet Food Festivals** in Hyderabad in June and November to showcase the diversity of millet foods, how they can make millets a part of their daily diets and why they should do so. The event involved a screening of film on millets, recipe demonstrations and a millet buffet. There was an overwhelming response to the tastes of millet dishes.



The **Uncultivated Greens Festival**, organized in August monsoon, saw an enthusiastic participation from visitors who travelled from other districts and states specifically to witness the festival and taste the unique greens in their rich diversity. Visitors were first taken to women's farms in Arjun Nayak Thanda and Potpalle villages to witness various greens and later gathered around Machnoor village for greens lunch and for a discussion around greens.



Aarogyam Jatharalu (Health Fairs) were organized in 18 villages during October to November. These health fairs were organized in villages to celebrate and honour traditional knowledge systems of health and nutrition. Sangham members gather together to discuss what are the prevailing health problems in their villages and get advise from elders on how resources around their own houses and farms can be used to cure them.



The year ended on a strong note with a **Special Consultation of Telagana Millet Sisters** that was organized on 22nd December. The event was attended by 75 millet sisters, mostly small and marginal rainfed farmers, from 6 districts of the state, to conclude the celebration of 'International Year of Millets 2023', take stock of existing problems for millet sisters and to draft a charter of demands of the necessary policies for millet revival in the state. Farmers expressed that the increase of commercial farming in villages is pushing farmers into debts and food insecurity. Together they identified that inclusion of millets in existing schemes like PDS with Minimum Support Price, ICDS, Mid-Day Meals, Crop Insurance, Incentive Bonus etc and also course correction with new initiatives for both input support and improving extension facilities were also recommended. The charter will soon be submitted to key state officials and politicians.



Sangham Entrepreneurs!



Sangham women also took bold steps towards entrepreneurship this year with the inauguration of Neem Oil Expelling Unit in Bidakanne Village, Jharasangham Village and Opening of Millet Outlets in 8 large villages and mandal towns. The unit in Bidakanne will supply Neem Oil and Neem Cake, which have excellent properties of being organic pesticides and fertilizer, to Sangham farmers during the next land preparation season. The Village Outlets aim to decentralize millet markets for sangham farmers rather than having to rely excessively on urban markets and to also popularize millets back into rural diets. District officials from Vanaparthi, telangana have visited these outlets and intend to implement a similar program in their region. This initiative was also featured in the [Indian Express](#).

Special Honors & Recognitions



Shri P.V. Satheesh was honored at 'People's Conference of Millets' organized by Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture Network (RRAN) and National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) '***in gratitude of Lifetime Contribution in Reviving Millets into Food Systems***'. Ms. Lakshmamma received the award on his behalf. Mr Satheesh conveyed his gratitude for the honor in a pre-recorded video message.

DDS was also honored with ***Lifetime Achievement Award by Raithu Nestham and Sri Muppavarapu Foundation*** in October. Smt Chandramma, Smt Anjamma and Smt Suryakala received this award as representatives of DDS in a special ceremony at Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh from Sri Venkaiah Naidu, Vice-President of India,

Initiating New Village Sanghams

In 2023, four new village sanghams were initiated in Vaddi, Ontelgadda Thanda, Siddapur Thanda and Algole villages. 210 women joined sanghams and were supported with 10-15 seed varieties from central seed bank from Machnoor. A total of 136 acres were supported for biodiverse cultivation of millets, pulses and oilseeds. Women from these sanghams also attended karyakarta meetings and other events to actively interact with other sanghams.



Health Workshops & Jatharas

Two workshops were organized on Health in 2023.

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Workshops and Events on Legal Literacy for Women

In 2023, legal karyakartas attended two legal karyakarta meetings and 50 women from sanghams attended a three-day intensive workshop on feminist consciousness and gender leadership. In May meeting, a special meeting with young sangham members for awareness on child protection laws and available resources for distressed women. It was organized by Ms. Uma Rani and Ms. Bujamma, lawyers at Zahirabad High Court. In July meeting, 50 legal karyakartas attended a meeting where they were trained on filing FIRs, Domestic violence laws and recourse on 'What to do when you are arrested', inspired by Dalit activist lawyer Mr. Bojja Tharakam.



Mobile Biodiversity Festival

The Mobile Biodiversity Festival, which has been an annual tradition of DDS has been celebrated grandly in its 23rd edition this year. With the year being International Year of Millets, this festival witnessed a special enthusiasm. The festival toured around 24 villages, punctuated by large mandal level jatharas and grand opening/closing ceremonies. The festival at levels involved participation of sangham farmers, village households, sarpanches, local officials and KVK scientists. There were also visitors from districts, states and countries who have travelled far distances to witness the festival after hearing about it from their friends or through media. Through village level reports, it is estimated that nearly 60,000 people have participated in this year's festival. Dr. Devinder Sharma, eminent agriculture policy activist, attended the closing ceremony as the guest of honour and was a special highlight to the festival.



All India Millet Sisters Network

In the International Year of Millets, partners of All India Millet Sisters Network, across the country have participated in several local level campaigns on millet awareness and advocacy with schools, district officials and universities. Biodiversity Festival was organized in 10 states which received much press coverage in local media. In this year, 433 farmers were supported by the AIMS network for their biodiverse farming.

Upgrading Seed Bank & Documenting Seed Catalogue

Few long pending repairs and maintenance which have affected the central seed bank building in Machnoor Village have been completed. A roof leakage, door crack and wiring problems have been repaired in the seed bank. A detailed seed catalogue on 30 crop varieties and 90 genetic varieties has also been documented in summer of 2023. It is being printed in 2024.

Fundraising Activities

Hiring of a dedicated fundraiser could not take place as we could not find a suitable candidate despite advertising twice for the position. However, two activities, Website Renovation for DDS and crowdfunding campaign for Sangham Radio began in 2023. The new website layout can be found at www.ddsindia.org

Policy and Advocacy

- B. Lakshamma, DDS Seed Keeper, was invited to participate in the People's Conference of Millets at New Delhi in February.
- K.Mogulamma, President of All India Millet Sisters Network was honored as a special guest at the State Millet Conclave organized by National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) in March at Rajendranagar, Hyderabad.
- In April, M. Vinoda from Nagwar and P. Narsamma from Metlakunta attended 'The Food Conclave' organized by the Government of Telangana at HITEC, Hyderabad.
- On May 22nd, DDS farmers participated in the celebration of International Day of Biodiversity organized by the Central Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, National Biodiversity Authority, Maharashtra Forest Department & Maharashtra state Biodiversity Board. Shri C. Achalender Reddy, Chairman, National Biodiversity Authority, visited the DDS exhibition stall and conversed with farmers.
- On August 9th, DDS Senior Seed keepers M. Chandramma and B.Lakshamma were invited as panel members to speak in a webinar 'Harnessing Ancestral Knowledge Systems for Food Sovereignty' on occasion of Indigenous People's Day, hosted by World Food Programme, India.
- In August, General Narsamma was invited as a guest speaker in an event organized jointly by Prasaar Bharati, Hyderabad and Centre for Women's Studies, University of Hyderabad to share her experiences and thoughts on women's role in media spaces.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)

Krishi Vigyan Kendra's (KVKs) are also known as Farm Science Centre KVK, which are a part of National Agricultural Research System (NARS), evaluates and demonstrates location-specific agricultural technology. They are serving as a Knowledge and Resource Center, supporting various sectors and improving the district's agricultural economy.

The KVK of Medak district was sanctioned to Deccan Development Society by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in 1991 and began operations in 1992 in Medak district, now known as Sangareddy District of Telangana State. DDS Krishi Vigyan Kendra (DDS KVK) strongly emphasizes sustainability as the cornerstone of agriculture in India. As a vast agrarian country committed to ensuring food and nutritional security, DDS KVK places sustainable agriculture at the forefront of all its programs. The vision of DDS Krishi Vigyan Kendra (DDS KVK) has been crafted in alignment with the organizational ethos and philosophy of the host institution. It seamlessly integrates the ideals of DDS with the mandates of ICAR to foster a farmer-centered participatory approach encompasses major crops and technological interventions tailored to the needs of Sangareddy district in Telangana State, India.

The KVK campus hosts over 200 plant species, including fruit, fodder, and wild trees. Additionally, the farm serves as a seed hub for 60 to 80 local food crop varieties, sourced from Dalit women farmers. The KVK has contributed significantly by way of transferring technologies related to organic dryland agriculture through Farm Testing (OFTs), Frontline Demonstrations (FLDs), training and extension activities, etc. The farmers, farm women and rural youth in the Sangareddy district (erstwhile Medak) have benefited from the KVK activities and trainings since its inception.

Details of Adopted Villages (2023)

S. N o.	Taluk/ Mandal	Name of the block	Name of the village	Year of adoption	Major crops & enterprises	Major problem identified	Identified Thrust Areas
KVK adopted villages							
1	Zaheera bad	Zaheerabad	Kashimpur	2019	Sugarcane, Millets, Pulses Zinger, Cotton	Wooly aphid & Root grub in Sugarcane, Wild bores & Birds problem in millets, Pod borers in Pulses, Rhizome rot in Zinger, Sucking pests in Cotton	Ecological methods of pest management
2	Jharasamgam	Jharasamgam	Bardipura	2019	Sugarcane, Millets, Pulses Zinger, Cotton	Wooly aphid & Root grub in Sugarcane, Wild bores & Birds problem in millets, Pod borers in Pulses, Rhizome rot in Zinger, Sucking pests in Cotton	Ecological methods of pest management Use of Knitted gloves in harvest of Millets
3	Mogudampally	Mogudampally	Raipallythanda	2021	Sugarcane, Millets, Pulses Zinger, Cotton	Wooly aphid & Root grub in Sugarcane, Wild bores & Birds problem in millets, Pod borers in Pulses, Rhizome rot in Zinger, Sucking pests in Cotton	Ecological methods of pest management

4	Mogdapalli	Mogdapalli	Jadimalapur	2021	Sugarcane, Millets, Pulses, Zinger, Cotton	Woolly aphid & Root grub in Sugarcane, Wild bores & Birds problem in millets, Pod borers in Pulses, Rhizome rot in Zinger, Sucking pests in Cotton	Ecological methods of pest management
DFI villages							
1	Zaheerabad	Zaheerabad	Arjunnaikthanda	2018	Sugarcane, Millets, Pulses, Ginger, Cotton	<p>Improper management practices and using less yielding and disease and pests susceptible varieties by farmers.</p> <p>Woolly aphid & Root grub in Sugarcane,</p> <p>Wild bores & Birds problem in millets,</p> <p>Pod borers in Pulses, Rhizome rot in Ginger, Sucking pests in Cotton</p> <p>Lack of employment for educated rural youth.</p> <p>Lack of additional income generating opportunities for rural women</p>	<p>Monitoring recommended scientific crop management practices.</p> <p>Awareness on high yielding and resistant varieties through OFT, FLD and Field Days at farmer's field.</p> <p>Ecological pest management. Promotion and demonstrations on organic manures and fertilizers preparation and application at field level.</p> <p>Awareness and trainings on micro and small agri-preneurship opportunities</p>
2	Jharasanganam	Jharasanganam	Bidekanne	2018	Sugarcane, Millets, Pulses, Ginger, Cotton, vegetable,	Improper management practices and using less yielding and disease and pests susceptible varieties by farmers	Monitoring recommended scientific crop management practices

					safflower	<p>Wooly aphid & Root grub in Sugarcane,</p> <p>Wild bores & Birds problem in millets,</p> <p>Pod borers in Pulses, Rhizome rot in Ginger, Sucking pests in Cotton.</p> <p>Lack of employment for educated rural youth.</p> <p>Decreased milk production and SNF%</p> <p>The income from safflower petals is much higher than safflower seeds, But the collection of these petals are extremely difficult because of presence of spines</p>	<p>Awareness on high yielding and resistant varieties</p> <p>Ecological pest management</p> <p>Promotion and demonstrations on organic manures, fertilizers and application at field level</p> <p>Training Programme on scientific dairy farming</p> <p>FLD on usage of protective clothing kit while harvesting of safflower</p>
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Priority/thrust areas

Crop/Enterprise	Thrust area
Cereals, millets, pulses, oilseeds	Yield enhancement, crop cultivation for seeds, and use of low cost inputs.
Fruits and vegetables	Yield enhancement, follow suitable crop production practices, use of techniques to reduce crop losses
Cattles, buffaloes, goat, sheep and poultry	Cultivation of suitable fodder crop, mineral supplementation, timely vaccination and treatment
Agricultural, Horticultural	Use of plant part extract, traps, entomopathogenic fungi etc in pest and disease management. Availability of honeybee boxes and extraction. Use of organic inputs in crop production.
Unemployment, migration, impact assessment, case studies, ITK	Farm based income generating activities, nutri garden in schools, awareness on organic agriculture, social networking
Value addition, drudgery	Enhancing nutritive value of food items, specialty foods – low

reduction, income generation	calorific value. Alternate manual harvesting tools.
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Salient Achievements

Achievements of Mandated activities (1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023)

S. No	Activity	Target	Achievement
1.	Technologies Assessed and refined(No.)	42	28
2.	On-farm trials conducted (No.)	19	12
3.	Frontline demonstrations conducted (No.)	23	16
4.	Farmers trained (in Lakh)	0.0249	0.0266
5.	Extension Personnel trained (No.)	8	0
6.	Participants in extension activities (in Lakh)	0.39	0.742
7.	Production and distribution of Seed (in Quintal)	45	18
8.	Planting material produced and distributed (in Lakh)	0.05	0.035
9.	Live-stock strains and finger lings produced and distributed (in Lakh)	0.3	0.11
10.	Soil samples tested by Mini Soil Testing Kit (No)	0	0
11.	Soil samples tested by Traditional Laboratory (No)	1500	2518
12.	Water, plant, manure, and other samples tested (No.)	0	0
13.	Mobile agro-advisory provided to farmers (No.)	25500	32610
14.	No.of Soil Health Cards issued by Mini Soil Testing Kits (No.)	0	0
15.	No.of Soil Health Cards issued by Traditional Laboratory (No.)	1500	2518

Give Salient Achievements by KVK during the year in bullet points:

- Technical programmes: OFT Completed (12), Executed (19); FLD Completed (16), Executed (23)
- CFLD'S : Pulses - 90 ha, Oilseeds - 30 ha; 15Qtl seeds distributed
- Farm production: Seeds - 18 Qtl, Fruits - 99 Kg, Vegetables - 40 Kg
- Seedlings and plants - 3500 no's
- Bio-inputs production: Vermicompost - 5 Tons, Enriched Compost - 9.2 Tons, Vermiwash - 540 lit, Panchagavya - 350 lit, Earthworms - 51 kgs, Waste decomposer - 470 lit, DashaparniKashayam- 400lit, Cow Urine - 183 lit, Jeevamrutham - 900 lit, Ghana jeevamrutham - 400kg, Azolla - 32 kgs, Mycorrhiza - 900 kgs.
- Extension Activities: 431.
- New Demonstration units: Terrace Garden, Poultry Unit, Sugarcane Nursery, Pulveriser,

- Farm Development: Plantation of bio-diverse trees 10 acre, drainage channel created on 6 acre, Purchased New Bore well Motors pump set at KVK farm.
- Convergence programme: Dept. of Agriculture, DRDA Sangareddy, PJTSAU, SKLTSU, NRC Meat, NABARD.
- Capacity Building programmes: Farm women, RAWE, Rural Youths, LEDP,
- Resource Persons : EEI Hyderabad, Forestry College, Mulugu, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangareddy, MRF Foundation Sadashivpet, Tara Govt degree college Sangareddy, Vidyanarya School, Hyd., Ganges Valley School, Hyd., PJTSAU Home Science College, Hyd., St. Marys, Hyd.,
- Millet Awareness and Agriculture Exhibitions – 28, Total Participants 35000
- Special events/important days celebrations : 16
- Successfully implemented all mandatory activities as directed by ATARI Hyderabad from time to time

TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Details of target and achievements of mandatory activities by KVK during 2023

OFT (Technology Assessment)

No. of OFTs		Number of technologies		Number of locations (Villages)		Total no. of Trials / Replications / Beneficiaries	
Targets	Achievement	Targets	Achievement	Targets	Achievement	Targets	Achievement
19	12	19	12	15	18	57	75

FLD (crop/enterprise/CFLDs)

No of Demonstrations		Area in ha		Number of Farmers / Beneficiaries / Replications	
Targets	Achievement	Targets	Achievement	Targets	Achievement
23	16	144	138	200	354

Training (including sponsored, vocational, and other trainings carried under Rainwater Harvesting Unit)

Clientele	Number of Courses		Number of Participants	
	Targets	Achievement	Targets	Achievement
Farmers and Farm Women	56	70	1680	2369
Rural youth	19	7	570	293
Extn. Functionaries	8	0	240	0

Extension Activities

Number of activities		Number of participants	
Targets	Achievement	Targets	Achievement
200	431	39000	74002

Seed Production (q)

Target	Achievement	Distributed to no. of farmers
45	18	120

Planting material (Nos.)

Target	Achievement	Distributed to no. of farmers
5500	3500	6