

## Progress this year

Every year, there is an external monitoring visit for AVI. This year, the report highlighted the fact that 239 new families had joined the project and 97% of the new families had less than 30 cents of land and 93% were below poverty line (BPL) families indicating that the project has successfully enrolled poorer families.

Most of the homestead cultivation is small scale with vegetables (aubergine, tomato, beans, chillies, ladies finger, cow pea etc) grown for home consumption. Some better-off farmers rear livestock (cows, goats and chickens) to supplement income and for farmyard manure.

So far this year, KGSN had distributed 2600 gunny bags, 390 seed packets, 210 (5kg) manure packets, 10,000 banana seedlings (from the agricultural university) and 10,600 other vegetable seedlings (cauliflower, cabbage, tomato, aubergine etc) also from government departments to farmers.

In part of Athiyanoor village around 20 dalit families are involved in the project. Three of them with hardly any land around their houses were growing vegetables using gunny bags with seeds, seedlings and manure provided by KGSN. All of these families are enrolled in the National Rural Employment Guarantee programme which offers them limited employment and they engage themselves in homestead vegetable cultivation in the morning and evening.

In Karingulam village one farmer, Krishnan Kutty is experimenting with growing arrowroot on part of the 80 cents of land he has around the house. He also has coconut, banana trees besides growing other vegetables in front of his house. Another notable plot is that of Prasanna, who is a spinster with speech and hearing impairment who has been encouraged by her brother Mohan to start vegetable cultivation.

Three such plots in Athiyanur and Karingulam are depicted in the pictures below.



Athiyanur Agila



Athiyanur Manju