

**Cornell Sathguru Foundation  
for Development**



**2024 - 2025**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**CORNELL SATHGURU FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT**

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## Director's Desk

I am very proud and thankful to share this year's Annual Report of the Cornell Sathguru Foundation for Development (CSFD). Over the past year, we have made strong progress in improving rural livelihoods through technology, training, and community involvement.

Our main goal is to help rural youth and women take the lead in changing agriculture for the better. This year, we focused more on agriculture drone technology and meat processing and Value addition. Through these programs, we reached over 20,000 people across Telangana. Our drone project not only created jobs but also helped Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) increase their income through better farming services.

Our training in meat processing gave many rural youth the skills and confidence to start or grow their own small businesses.

We are very thankful to our partners, especially NIPHM and NMRI, for their valuable technical support. We also thank NABARD and Madison Incentives for believing in us and funding our work.

This report is more than just numbers. It tells the story of people working together, growing stronger, and building a better future for rural India.

We invite you to read these inspiring stories and be part of our journey

**Hemalaha Vijayaraghavan**

**Director**

**Cornell Sathguru Foundation for Development**



# About CSFD

Cornell Sathguru Foundation for Development (CSFD) is a registered not-for-profit organization jointly promoted by Cornell University, USA, and Sathguru India. The Foundation is dedicated to fostering sustainable social development by enhancing capacities, creating knowledge, promoting entrepreneurship, and advancing gender equity in rural communities.



**Cornell Sathguru Foundation  
for Development**

Drawing on expertise from globally renowned institutions such as Cornell University and leading state agricultural universities in India, CSFD works at the intersection of technology, innovation, and agribusiness. The Foundation is guided by a distinguished board and supported by an expert team comprising professionals from the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at Cornell and specialists from Sathguru.

With its deep technical partnerships and strong grassroots presence, CSFD designs and implements initiatives that meaningfully engage youth in agriculture, empower farmer communities, and scale innovations for inclusive and sustainable rural development.



# Vision & Mission



## Vision

To facilitate sustainable social development through life sciences and technology

## Mission

To contribute towards sustainable agriculture and development by enhancing capacities, knowledge creation, promoting entrepreneurship and gender equity

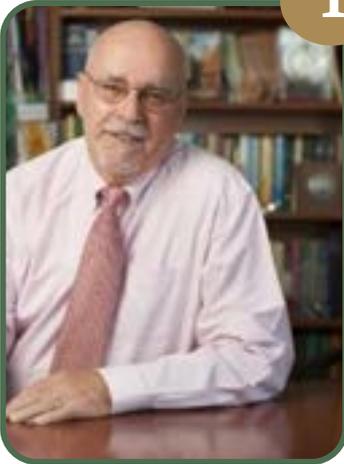


Agriculture must not only feed the body but also nurture the planet



# Leadership

1



2



3



4



5



6



01. Ronnie Coffman

02. K. Vijayaraghavan

03. K.V.Raman

04. Hemalatha

05. Kannan Ragunathan

06. Janet McCue



# Sustainable Development Goals

# Highlights : 2024 - 2025



## Highlights of 2024 - 2025

Improving Employment and Livelihood Opportunities in Agriculture Through Drone Technology – Project EOD

## Highlights of 2024 - 2025

Entrepreneurship Acceleration Training Program for Rural Youth on Meat Processing





# Improving Employment and Livelihood Opportunities in Agriculture Through Drone Technology – Project EOD

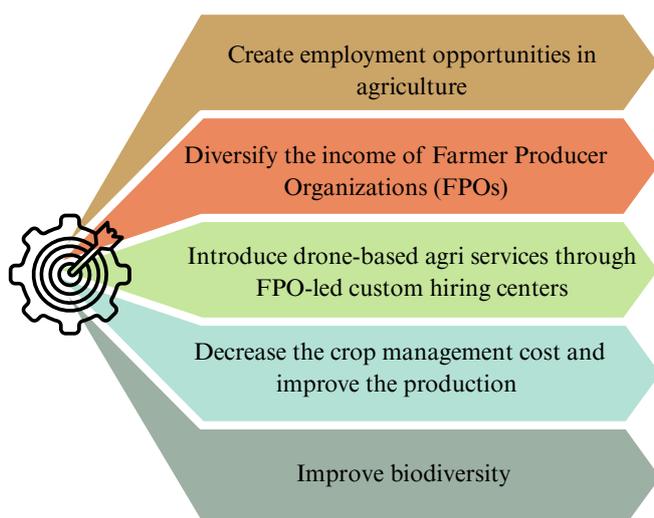
## Project Background

Agriculture in India is experiencing a significant shift with the integration of digital and precision technologies. While these innovations offer the potential to improve productivity and reduce input costs, small and marginal farmers—who constitute the majority—often remain on the margins due to limited access, affordability, and technical awareness. Recognizing this gap, the Cornell Sathguru Foundation for Development (CSFD), in partnership with NABARD, launched a pioneering drone-based agriculture initiative aimed at democratizing access to agri-tech solutions and fostering inclusive growth.

The project is designed to empower Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) by enabling them to establish FPO Led Custom Hiring Centers (FLCHCs) that offer drone-based spraying and broadcasting services. These centers not only provide affordable and efficient agricultural services to member farmers but also generate local employment by training rural youth to become licensed drone pilots.



## Objectives



Drones significantly reduce labor, time, and input costs while improving the efficiency and uniformity of pesticide/fertilizer application.

# Project Structure



## Implementation Partner



**Cornell Sathguru Foundation  
for Development**

## Financial Partner



## Technical Partner



## Project Locations - Districts in Telangana

No	Name of the FPO	District	Share Holders
1	Nekkonda FPCL	Warangal	555
2	Inavolu FPCL	Hanmakonda	550
3	Zaffergadh FPCL	Ghanpur	580
4	Hasanparthy FPCL	Hanmakonda	546
5	Nelamma FPCL	Jangaon	500
6	Nerada FPCL	Nalgonda	589
7	Kangal FPCL	Nalgonda	620
8	Nelathalli FPCL	Nalgonda	680
9	Indravelli FPCL	Adilabad	845
10	DNT FPCL	Adilabad	635
11	BBWS FPCL	Asifabad	593
12	Ekachakrapura Bodhan FPCL	Nizamabad	640
13	Kedareshawara Nandipet FPCL	Nizamabad	612
14	Tekmal FPCL	Sanagreddy	510
15	Ammapally FPCL	Mahbubnagar	460



## Project Locations - Districts in Telangana

1. Warangal
2. Hanmakonda
3. Nalgonda
4. Adilabad
5. Asifabad
6. Medak
7. Mahbubnagar
8. Jangaon
9. Nizamabad



CSFD selected 24 youth from 15 FPOs across Telangana and facilitated a 12-day DGCA-certified Remote Pilot Training at the National Institute of Plant Health Management (NIPHM) – Drone Academy. Upon successful completion, all participants were awarded DGCA drone pilot licenses, positioning them as qualified professionals to lead field operations within their respective FPOs.



Following the training, CSFD extended comprehensive handholding support to ensure seamless implementation. This included facilitating access to finance by guiding FPOs through loan applications with financial institutions and helping them secure funds under the Agri Infrastructure Fund (AIF) with a 3% interest subvention. As a result, many FPOs accessed loans at an effective interest rate of just 6%.





In addition, CSFD connected FPOs with leading drone manufacturing companies, enabling them to make informed purchasing decisions based on technical features and cost comparisons. CSFD provided continuous mentoring and technical support for one year, ensuring that both the FPOs and trained drone pilots could operate the services effectively and sustainably.



# Project Results



**Employment  
Generation**

**24**

Youth



**FPOs Profit**

**30%**

Increased



**FPO Shareholders  
Benefited**

**10500**



**Farmers Out  
Reach**

**5800**



**Acreages  
Covered**

**16000**



**Chemical  
Usage**

**15% - 25 %  
Decreased**



**Water Usage**

**90%**

Decreased



**Time  
Consumption**

**80 % - 90%**

Decreased



- Overcame labor shortages
- Improved the health of farmers
- Protected biodiversity

## Anumula Sudhakar - Kangal FPO



Sudhakar from Kangal FPO, Nalgonda, successfully completed DGCA-certified Remote Pilot Training and launched drone spraying services through the FPO.

Within just eight months, during the Kharif and Rabi seasons, the FPO provided services across 1,800 acres, generating ₹9 lakhs in revenue and achieving a net profit of ₹4.86 lakhs. This success enabled Sudhakar to earn a stable monthly salary of ₹30,000, highlighting the strong potential of drone technology to create sustainable income and improve FPO-led service delivery in agriculture.



# Mankoji Raju - Nandipet FPO

Despite being enthusiastically trained as a drone pilot, Mankoji Raju from Kedareswara Nandipet, Nizamabad FPO, initially faced hesitation from his farmer network regarding the adoption and viability of drone technology. The lack of confidence among farmers prevented his FPO from venturing into a drone hiring center, even though Raju was determined to put his training to use.

Refusing to be discouraged, Raju continued exploring ways to apply his skills for economic gain. With the support of CSFD, he secured employment as a drone pilot with Coromandel International Limited. This opportunity not only provided him with a stable monthly additional income of INR 30,000, but also allowed him to create awareness about the benefits of drone technology among local farmers.

Through his dedication and performance, Raju excelled in his role and was recognized by Coromandel as a Best Drone Pilot for Nizamabad region, covering a large acreage in a short span of time. His success story has become a source of inspiration within his FPO helping rebuild trust in the technology and motivating members to invest in establishing their own FPO-led drone hiring center.

Raju's journey exemplifies how access to technology, skill development, and institutional support can open new livelihood opportunities while paving the way for a tech-driven, sustainable future in farming.



## Entrepreneurship Acceleration Training Program for Rural Youth on Meat Processing

As part of its ongoing mission to promote rural entrepreneurship and skill development, the Cornell Sathguru Foundation for Development (CSFD) has been working since 2016 to empower rural youth and women through capacity-building programs across various agri-value chains. Continuing this commitment, CSFD organized a focused training program this year on meat processing and value addition, aimed at equipping participants with practical, market-relevant skills.

This program was conducted in collaboration with the National Meat Research Institute (NMRI), located in Chengicherla, Hyderabad — a premier institute with expertise in scientific meat handling and value chain development.



# Training topics

➤ **Wholesome meat production**

➤ **Slaughtering**

Goat/sheep and poultry

➤ **Preparation of ground meat products**

Burger patty and meatballs

➤ **Fabrication process**

Chicken, goat/sheep, pig cut-up parts & demonstration of meat curing

➤ **Value-added meat products**

Soups, pickles, mutton cutlets, sheek kebabs.

➤ **Preparation of emulsion**

Sausage, processing of nuggets, croquettes, enrobed eggs

➤ **Food safety requirements**

➤ **Preparation of Detailed Project Report**

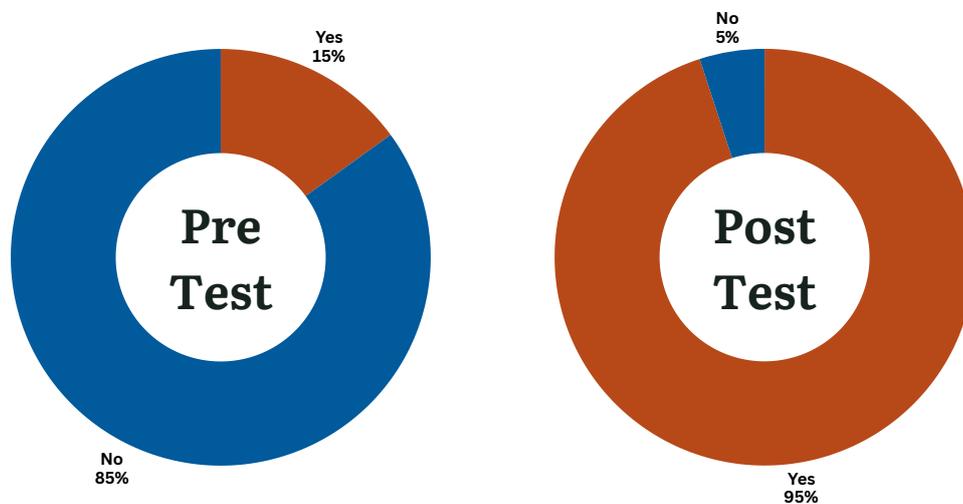




A total of 20 participants, selected from different districts across Telangana, attended the 5-day residential training program. The curriculum covered the entire value chain — from hygienic slaughter practices and meat handling to packaging, cold chain management, and development of value-added products such as sausages, meatballs, and ready-to-cook items.



### Participants' knowledge on “Meat Processing and Value addition - Pre and post test analysis



To ensure the effectiveness of every training program, CSFD follows a structured pre- and post-assessment framework. This standard approach was also applied to the meat processing and value addition training.

As per the pre-training assessment, nearly 85% of participants had little to no prior knowledge of meat processing techniques or value-added products. However, the post-training analysis revealed a significant improvement, with 90% of participants demonstrating a strong understanding of the key concepts, processes, and entrepreneurial opportunities in the meat sector.



The meat processing and value addition training program marked an important step in CSFD's mission to build entrepreneurial capacity among rural youth. By equipping participants with practical skills, technical knowledge, and exposure to real-world business opportunities, the program not only fostered individual growth but also laid the foundation for future micro-enterprises in the meat sector.

# Upcoming Women Entrepreneur

## Srujana Swamy's Feedback

Srujana Swamy's Doungu brand - preservative-free pet treats are now available in over 15 pet stores across Hyderabad, offering healthier, high-protein, gut-friendly options for dogs and cats and pet parents are loving them.

But behind this growing success is a story of purpose, learning, and persistence. As a child, Srujana was always surrounded by animals, often feeding stray dogs and dreaming of doing something meaningful for their well-being. However, she didn't know how to turn her passion into a business.

Her breakthrough came when she attended a five-day training program on Meat Processing and Value Addition organized by the Cornell Sathguru Foundation for Development (CSFD) at National Meat Research Institute, Chengicherla, Hyderabad. The training helped her gain critical knowledge in hygiene, safety, shelf life, packaging, and regulatory aspects of meat-based food processing.

It was during this program that Srujana connected her lifelong love for animals with practical scientific knowledge, giving her the confidence to start her venture. She successfully launched Doungu a pet food startup rooted in natural nutrition and care.

Srujana began with five products and made them affordable to build awareness. The positive feedback she received from shopkeepers and pet owners encouraged her to expand and explore preservative-free fresh food as well. She's now focused on scaling up responsibly, improving shelf life, and working toward certifications to make her business more sustainable.

Srujana's journey is not just about building a brand but about redefining pet nutrition and proving that when passion is matched with the right training, real impact follows.



Srujana Swamy



# Redefining Livelihoods: The Journey from Livestock Seller to Skilled Butcher



**Mr. Vishnu Vardhan - Meat processor**

Vishnu Vardhan's Journey Toward Building a Profitable Livestock Enterprise

Vishnu Vardhan from Nagarkurnool district turned his passion for livestock into a profitable business after attending CSFD's Entrepreneurship Acceleration Training on Meat Processing and Value Addition at the National Meat Research Institute, Chengicherla.

Earlier, Vishnu sold his sheep and goats to traders for minimal profit. Through the training, he learned scientific slaughtering, hygienic processing, packaging, and value addition, which helped him start selling fresh, hygienic meat directly in his community.

By eliminating middlemen, Vishnu now earns 20–25% higher profits and has gained strong trust from local customers. Encouraged by this success, he plans to expand his shed, increase livestock numbers, and start poultry farming, ensuring steady year-round income.

“Earlier, I saw myself as just a farmer. Now, I see myself as an entrepreneur,” Vishnu says proudly

Vishnu's story proves that with the right training and innovation, even small farmers can build sustainable and profitable enterprises.



# Translating Knowledge into Impact



**Mr. Praveen, Restaurant Owner**

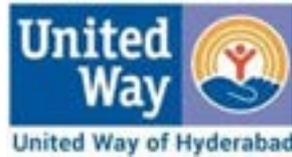
Mr. Praveen runs a small restaurant in Habsiguda. He always wanted to offer something different and better to his customers. To improve his business, he joined CSFD's 5-day training on Meat Processing and Value Addition, held in partnership with the National Meat Research Institute (NMRI) in Chengicherla.

During the training, he learned how to marinate meat, improve its taste and quality, follow hygiene practices, and make ready-to-cook meat products. He also understood what kind of dishes modern customers enjoy.

After the training, Praveen changed his menu and started offering new items like chicken nuggets, burgers, kababs, and meatballs. His customers loved the new dishes, and his business improved. The number of customers increased by 20%, and many gave positive feedback.



# Funding Partners



# Collaborative / Technical Partners



# Contact Us

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- All donations made to CSFD are exempted under section 80G of the Income Tax Act, meaning that 50% of your donation amount will be eligible for tax exemption.
- CSFD is CSR1 compliant meaning that we can undertake CSR activities funded by corporations and companies



**Empowering rural voices is the first step  
toward sustainable progress**