

## ***Creating Drip to Market Agro Corridor (DMAC) for reducing water footprints in agriculture and double Farmers' income through innovative agro marketing model: An analysis on one the World's Largest Drip Irrigation Project at Ramthal Marol, Karnataka, India***

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### ***Abstract***

This paper presents a successful model of micro irrigation with an inbuilt institutional mechanism that ensures knowledge transfer, agronomical support, access to quality inputs and high value market to farmers in arid and semi-arid regions.

The model is being implemented at one of the World's Largest Drip Irrigation Site in Bagalkot district of Karnataka. It is potentially irrigating 24,000 hectares and benefiting 15,000 farmers. Krishna Bhagya Jal Nigam Limited (KBJNL), one of the Water Corporation of Government of Karnataka conducted a feasibility study on adopting Drip Irrigation and the findings revealed that due to high water use efficiency (WUE) in Drip Irrigation System 12571 Ha can now be irrigated with only 1.43 TMC of water thus saving 1.34TMC of water. The saved water of 1.34 TMC had the potential to double the total irrigated area. This has cut down the cost of future irrigation for KBJNL and helped farmers in almost halving their irrigation cost and labour cost.

In addition, Farmers are organised under Water User Associations', a community collective that drives the project and trained and equipped as a seller institution to promote collective marketing. Aggregation through Water User Associations enables farmers to directly trade with big buyers eliminating the middlemen thus accruing appreciated price for their produce. Water User Associations are registered as Cooperative Societies and the project envisions creating independent groups in the longer run, which will have the potential to drive larger socio-economic transformation for the region.



### ***Biography:***

Karuppanchetty Somasundaram is currently associated with EY as Associate Director in Advisory Services. He has over 20 years of experience in areas of Agri-business, Business Incubation & Agri Entrepreneurship Development,

Management Consultancy, Innovation and Agri Investment. He was instrumental in incubating several ventures directly and scaling it out through sustainable projects. As CEO of Atal Incubation Center at Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur, AP, Karuppanchetty promoted Start-ups in Agribusiness & Renewable Energy. As CEO of Nepal Agri Business Innovation Center he had set up the country's first Agri Incubator. Under his stewardship ABI-ICRISAT has got Best Incubator Award from DST, Govt of India, Asia Pacific Award for AABI, VillGro & FICCI food 360. He has worked in more than 8 countries on Agri Business Development across Asia and Africa.



### ***Speaker Publications:***

1. Karuppanchetty Somasundaram. Drip to Market Agro Corridor (DMAC) at one of the world's Largest Drip Irrigation Site, Ramthal in Karnataka – An Analysis, Asia Pacific Award for AABI, 2019.

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