

## **Assessing & mitigating health risks from puffed rice cluster – a case study of Davangere, Karnataka, India**

The western regional center along with the southern regional center was engaged in a pilot project that assessed the health risks to workers and the community living in the vicinity of the puffed rice sector. This was a preliminary study to identify the mitigating strategies to reduce the health risks to workers and the community in the puffed rice area. The results of the study would help the research team to develop a full research proposal. The overall objective of the pilot project, was to identify ways to improve health and well-being of the community on a sustainable basis in regions stressed by puffed rice manufacturing activities. This study adopted a three-pronged approach to assess the health risks from the various domains; socio-economic, health and environmental. The study combined the Eco-health frame- work, which includes trans-disciplinarity, social and gender equity and multi stakeholder participation with risk analysis (including the integrated study of hazards, exposures, dose-response and / or health effects). The pilot phase of this study provided the research team with base line data on environmental quality, health status and socio economic conditions. The health and environment risk assessment identified the key areas in which interventions were needed and the social assessment provided an understanding of the complex web of social issues and power structures that need to be taken into account to design and operationalise the various interventions in a sustainable manner. Most importantly, this study served as a preparatory stage, to successfully elicit the confidence and cooperation from the different stakeholders to participate in next phase of the study.

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