

Rural Women Development Society (RWDS)
Tiruvannamalai

Annual Report

Period: April 2014 to March 2015

Brief Introduction

RWDS has been working in Tiruvannamalai district a declared drought prone district in Tamil Nadu. The district has very low literacy rate of less than 30%. The problem of illiteracy is more acute among the dalit women who are victims of caste, class and gender discriminations. Most rural areas are denied of the basic amenities, the right to education, and the right to access to health and health care and right to gender equality. Domestic violence is more prevalent in the district. Women are left to the mercy of the alcoholic addict husbands and suffer from physical violence, desertion and polygamy. These women are vulnerable to Sexual violence both in private and public spheres.

The change and modern practices in agriculture have deprived their traditional occupancy and increased unemployment. poverty and starvation have forced many unorganized laborers to migrate to Chennai, Bangalore and other small towns in search of work. The migrated men setup a family of their own in the newly migrated place and ignore to take care of the family left behind. In such a situation the number of single women headed household in the area has been on the increase.

Girl children are forced to be at home to take care of their younger siblings and to attend to the domestic needs. Agricultural lands have been alienated; food crops have paved their way to cash crops. Traditional farming, food and grains have disappeared. The excessive usages of hazardous chemical fertilizers and pesticides not only have poisoned the land, food and seeds but also have increased the food insecurity.

It is in this back drop that RWDS has been working in the district of Tiruvannamalai. The organization has been working in 60 villages of

Pudhupalayam, Thuringapuram Kalasapakkam and Tiruvannamalai blocks in Tiruvannamalai district.

Activities carried out during the reporting year

1. Capacity Building for Women's & Leader's

300 women from 21 Self Help groups were short listed to participate in the capacity building programmes. The 300 women were divided into 2 clusters of 150 women each. The participants were given training on 5 modules. Each module of training was for two duration.

The modules were:

1. Introduction to the project and the need for Women's
2. Importance of maintaining different records and documents
3. Group loans, Finance management and sustainability of groups
4. Importance of education for girl children, Health, Environment and social security schemes
5. Economic empowerment and Marketing

The trainings gave the participants an insight into what sort of viable economic venture they can prefer in the local context. It gave them clarity on marketing and different opportunities in marketing. Further clarification on importance of girl children education and for gender equality was obtained. Above all the training was useful for them to update information on various types of records to be maintained and about the modes of obtaining and reimbursing Loan.

Capacities of Dalit women built to manage their Team in a more systematic, scientific and responsible manner and their entrepreneurial skills of women increased.

The trainings were given on the following dates:

25.10.2014, 26.10.2014, 29.10.2014, 31.10.2014, 01.11.2014, 02.11.2014, 05.11.2014, 06.11.2014, 19.11.2014, 20.11.2014, 22.11.2014, 23.11.2014, 26.11.2014, 29.11.2014, 30.11.2014, 03.12.2014, 04.12.2014, 07.12.2014, 10.12.2014, 11.12.2014, 13.12.2014, 07.02.2015 and 28.3.2015.

2. Sensitizing trainings

- i. On 31.05.2014, training was given on the importance of utilizing the grama sabha to access their basic amenities and to keep their village clean. This was followed up by training on 15.11.2014.
- ii. Four trainings were held on 05.07.2014, 15.09.2014, 27.12.2014 and 14.03.2015 with focus on duties and responsibilities of citizens. The training also shared knowledge on constitutional rights.
- iii. A sensitization program was organized at Tiruvannmalai to share knowledge among women on Domestic Violence on 02.09.2014

3. Distribution of Revolving Fund for Economic Development of Women's

Beneficiaries were identified basing on the criteria that they are women who are poor and oppressed, women below poverty line, Landless women, women who are widows, destitute and single women. A separate accounts were opened in the name of each Women. Cheques were issued in the name of respective Women

The respective Women's groups decided on the first batch of beneficiaries. 7 beneficiaries per Each Women were identified by the Village. Thus a total of 146 beneficiaries were selected in the first batch. Among them 13 are widows, 3 are destitute and the rest of the 130 are below poverty line women. The mode of utilization of the loan amount was left to the beneficiaries. Each one could choose the venture of her own. From each two women each opted to purchase cows. These beneficiaries were given Rs.5000/- each and the others were given Rs.3000/- each. Since the cost of cows is very high they were given Rs.5000/- each. The balance money they contributed.

Those who received Rs. 3000/- each invested the money for other entrepreneurs. The following are the different ventures for which they have invested the loans. As per the resolutions of the respective the loan beneficiaries have to reimburse the loans in 10 installments, in month's time. Each month each beneficiary has to reimburse either Rs.330/ or Rs.550/-, in proportionate to the quantum of loan borrowed. Each Team is responsible for ensuring the reimbursement. Agreement was entered into with each Women's by way of adhering to legal compliance.

Present status

The beneficiaries have started to reimburse the loans as per the resolutions of their respective Teams. The Director ensures the overall coordination of the programme. One accountant and 2 programme coordinators regularly support the Team. The coordinators convene regular meetings for the Team once in every fortnight. They make use of the avenue to share information on health and rights of children and women, schemes and other information. They act as liaison with the bank and the Team , Team organization. They verify the records, make suggestions for rectification and help the Team to function better. Monthly review meetings are planned for the beneficiaries

S.no	Purpose of loan support	No of Beneficiaries
1	Cow	43
2	Goat	35
3	Petty shop	18
4	Tailoring Machine	20
5	Cloth Cut Piece Sale	6
6	Bangles Shop	2
7	Firewood	1
8	Coconut leaf knitting	9
9	Fruit stall	2
10	Rabbit Sales	1
11	Flower shop	1
12	Chicken shop	1
13	Plant sales	1
14	Tiffin Shop	2
15	Mobile Recharge	1
16	Vegetables sales	2
17	Shoe shop	1
	Total	146

II. STRENGTHENING FOR DALIT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

1.Capacity Building

- ❖ The capacity of the leaders enhanced and they are very active in the villages. They learnt the importance of utilizing the grama sabha to access their basic amenities. They have increased the membership base. 83 new members have enrolled and Rs4950/- is collected as subscription. The members are participating in the Grama sabha meetings and are representing the common issues of the villages. The Annanthal village of Vasudevanpattu panchayat got a new mini tank due to the pressure exerted by the leaders. This was an achievement of the training.
- ❖ More women participated in the Grama Sabhas of their respective panchayats held on January 26, 2015. Common issues of the villages were represented by the women. As a result of the representation before the grama sabha y the dallit women Tar road was laid from Ramasampuram to Mattavettu.
- ❖ In Gulalpady panchayat the toilet that were neglected due to lack of water was revamped as the panchayat gave bore well connection. A new ration shop building has been constructed and allocated for Gangampattu village
- ❖ During this period, the members of youth group attended two capacity building trainings on various environmental protection acts and its provisions related ecosystem on 05.05.2014 and on 11.06.2014 at Kanchi centre.
- ❖ The trainings were facilitated by Ms. Rajammal, the chief functionary RWDS, Mr. Rajendran and Mr. Angelis, a lawyer from Chennai.
- ❖ The cadres were equipped with the protective legal provisions and the mechanisms that they needed to approach to use the instruments.
- ❖ 45 cadres who were regularly oriented.

2. Legal Training

- ❖ The following women got land pattas due to the knowledge imparted through the training.
The beneficiaries:
Annammal w/o Rajendran, Oranthavady
Alamelu w/o Ayyavu, Gangampattu
Jeyalakshmi w/o murugan, Alathur
- ❖ Periapapa w/o Munusamy of Viswanathapuram received one acre of land in her name and further obtained patta in her name. Malliga w/o Pushparaj received from the government 50 cents of arable land.
- ❖ Purpose of the program was to enhance the economic status of the dalit women and thereby strengthening the Dalit women movement.
The purpose was shared with the participants and beneficiaries were identified in the course of the meeting. The selection was basing on the criteria that they are Dalit women who are poor and oppressed, women below poverty line, women who are widows, destitute, PLHA, differentially able women.

3. Commemoration of International Women's Day

March 8, the International Women's Day was commemorated at Kanchi, Tiruvannamalai, in which. Ms. Saraswathy, Inspector of police was the chief guest. Other guests of honor were health center Dr. Senthilnathan, Indian Bank manager. They shared about the importance and relevancy of the day.

4. Livelihood Support For Goat Rotation Program For Poor Women

- ❖ Information was shared on goat rearing, the methods to be adopted, and the formalities to be complied including documents to be preserved, photo preservation, required documents to be submitted and finally the agreement to be signed for entrusting a lamp to the organization. Each beneficiary should give a share of Rs750/- to the organization. 50 persons were selected.
- ❖ 39 beneficiaries were given goats, tokens issued and insured. Tokens were issued by Veterinary doctor Vel Murugan.
- ❖ 11 beneficiaries were given goats, tokens issued and insured. Tokens were issued by Veterinary doctor Vel Murugan.
- ❖ 12 beneficiaries were given goats, tokens issued and insured. Tokens were issued by Veterinary doctor Vel Murugan.

❖ All the 62 beneficiaries insured their goats

❖ They learnt the importance of preserving goats. The goats need to be protected against the natural calamities and the other components. They learnt to take preventive measures with locally available herbs and tablets. For breeding also suggestions were made.

5. Milks Cows – IGP

For promotion of organic farming it is essential that there is the need for cow dung which is essential for preparation of natural fertilizer, pest controllers, vermin compost and other essentials that are required for organic farming. This is very essential for their venture of collective farming.

Two groups that are involved in collective farming were selected for IGP. They submitted application requesting for milking cows. 6 beneficiaries were shortlisted and they were asked to produce documentary supports. After submission of basic required documents, a separate account was opened for the purpose of the project in the name of the beneficiaries. Money was deposited in the bank accounts and cheques were issued in their name to the tune of Rs.30000/- each. They withdrew the money and purchased cows. Tokens were issued and the cows were insured.\

3. Socio Economic Empowerment of Poor Women

S.No	Skill training				
1.1.a	No. of villages covered	10	No. of families covered		20
1.1.b	Name of the skill training	Driving Training	Males	Females	Total
			18	2	20

S.No	Income Generation Activities						
1.2.a	No. of villages covered	5	No. of families covered				34
1.2.b	Family coverage	Male headed	-	Female headed	34	Total	34
1.2.c	Type of IGA	Milks Cow					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ They got Driving License For Students ❖ They attained 30% Increased in their Economical achievements 					

4. Protection Of the Ecology and Environment In Tiruvannamalai District

1.Sensitizing the community and involving them on promotion of ecology:

- The CBOs formed by RWDS namely Nava Yuga (New Age) Youth Federation, Children Parliament, Dalit Women Movement came forwarded and involved in tree planting activity.
- During this period, 12000 saplings planted in 15 panchyats by them in common places like Temple, Road side, Common lands in the village. RWDS supported them to received saplings from Forest department under mass tree plantation programme. The local Panchyat came forward to safeguard the by involving local people under NREGA scheme to provide protection covers and watering work.
- In the same manner, during the drought session, the youths were organized under NREGA scheme to fill the watering pits constructed by forest department for forest animals. The regular monitoring of saplings done by children's club and youth groups.
- They are also involved in campaign against plastic, cleaning drinking water tank, drainage at village level. So far, Kulalpadi and Vadamathur panchyat announced and maintained as Plastic free panchyats.
- 12000 saplings planted in common places within 15 local Panchayat

2.Promoting sustainable agriculture

RWDS working among Dalit women from 1986s onwards through right based issues. It is because of the necessity from the community and changing of strategies intervention among Dalit women, we took this initiative.

The village– Ananthal, Nanthimangalam, Nammiyenthal, Gengampattu, Oranthavadi were very active in farming activity and involved in vegetable cultivation. Hence, the general awareness programme about low input agriculture was done in the month of November and December 2014. With the support of KVK – Virinjipuram of Vellore district, 5 village level organic farming trainings conducted for preparation of earth worm, pest repellent and growth promoters like Panchakaviya. The selected farmers from this village were taken to Aurovil for exposure visit to learn integrated farming techniques through Aurovil Action group.

In the meantime, one of the well-wisher and local support of RWDS, IWID came forward to support this initiative at different manner. They insisted RWDS to promote collective farming activities. Hence RWDS decided to form collective farming groups in these 5 villages.

3.Promotion of Collective Farming Groups:

Under the concept of collective farming, 4 landless agricultural cooli women and one small woman farmers having agriculture land with water source selected for this intervention. This 4+1 jointed together and formed as collective farming group.

The selected women underwent two visited women collective farms in Tiruvallur and Nagapattinam districts.

After the exposure visit, They took lease land from their group member and started doing farming activity organically. Each Collective farming group received Rs. 10000 as seed money for initiating farming activities. End of the cultivation period, the benefit was shared equally after paid the lease. Each member got Rs.3000 as cash and also received vegetables for their own consumption.

5. Village level meetings

Date	Venue	Theme
12.04.2014	Oranthavady	Procedures of the Grama Sabha
25.04.2014	Alathur	Domestic Violence
13.05.2014	Annanthal	Organic Farming
22.05.2014	Vasudevanpattu Melapunjai	Government schemes
12.06.2014	Senthamangalam	Basic amenities with specific focus on drainage
24.06.2014	Keezh Palu and Mel Palur;	Rights of Children
15.07.2014	Gangampattu	Free compulsory education
27.07.2014	Mattavettu	Awareness education for young girls
15.08.2014	Viswanathapuram	Globalization
18.08.2014	Japthikarianthal	Environmental protection
08.09.2014	Nathavady	Collective farming women's
29.09.2014	Periyakulam	Income promotion economic ventures
10-10-2014	Japthikariyandhal	Government schemes
20-10-2014	Mela punjai	Rights of Children
4.11.2014	Kilkuppam	Collective farming women
13-11-2014	Sakthi nagar	Health Education
2.12.2014	Periya kuppam	Environmental protection
26.12.2014	Mettavetu	Procedures of the Grama Sabha
13.1.2015	Gengampattu	Awareness education for young girls
22.1.2015	Nathavadi	Panchayat Raj
4-2-2015	Kottakarai Anandhal	Income Generation Activities
15.2.2015	Vasu Devanpattu	Domestic Violence
5-3-2015	Viswanathapuram	Basic amenities with specific focus on drainage
17-3-2015	Alathur	Free compulsory education

6. Government Schemes availed

6.1. Widow pension

Beneficiaries of widow pension of Rs.1000/-

1. Unnamalai w/o Murugesan, Mattavettu
2. Amirtham w/o Karappan, mattavettu
3. Baby w/o Settu, Keezhkuppam
4. Veerammal w/o Poongan, Oranthavady

5. Kullachi w/o Parasuraman, Japthikariyanthal
6. Poonkan w/o Veeran Oranthavady
7. Neelavathy w/o Murugan Viswanathapuram
8. Vimala w/o Jyothi Gangampatt
9. Kannammal w/o Rangasamy Alathur
10. Jyothi w/o Ravi Vasudevpattu
11. Panchavarnam w/o Boopalan Periyakulam

6.2 OAP

1. Rejendran s/o Vedi, Annanthal
2. Manjula w/o Rajendran, Annanthal
3. Muthammal w/o Kannan Japthikariyanthal
4. Sivakami w/o Kuppan Melnachipattu
5. Kuppan s/o Ramasamy Melnachipatt

6.3. Toilets

1. Kavitha w/o Ramajeyam
2. Sathya w/o Subramani
3. Vanitha w/o Selvaraji
4. Bharathi w/o Asokan
5. Vennila w/o Radhakrishnan

6.4. Health Benefits

The following women benefitted under the Dr. Muthulakshmi memorial maternity scheme of Rs.12000 each.

1. Kanchana w/o Ramesh, Gangampattu
2. Malar w/o Manickam, Gangampattu
3. Parimala w/o Annamalai, Japthikariyanthal
4. Sivasangari w/o Sivakumar, Vasudevanpattu
5. Amala w/o John, Kottakarai
6. Alamelu w/o Ramesh Keezh palur
7. Jeyakody w/o Murugan, Mattavettu
8. Surya w/o Venketraman Oranthavady
9. Poornima w/o Ravichandren Annanthal
10. Jeyanthi w/o Raman, Alathur

6.5. Government Schemes for differentially able people Rs. 1000/- each

The following were the beneficiaries:

1. Rajaram s/o Mannu, Keezhkuppam
2. Robert s/o Grace, Kottakaari
3. Sangeetha d/o Chandran Keezh Palur
4. Muniammal w/o Munusami Oranthavdy
5. Kullachi w/o Parasuraman, Japthikariyanthal
6. Mani s/o Prakash Vadamathur
7. Revathy d/o Arunachalem, Melapunjai
8. Ramadhass/o Munusamy Gulalpady
9. Ilango s/o Samuvel, Nathavady

6.6. Marriage support for HSC completed:

Rs.25000/- each received by the following beneficiaries from VAO through the district collector office.

- Nadiya w/o Senthil of Oranthavady on 20.06.2014
- Malthi w/o Muthu of Alathur
- Ilaya Nila w/o Vijay of Japthi Kariyanthal received on 30.07.2014

6.7. Job Cards:

The following people had been away in Tirupur and other places for employment and on their return they were helped to get new job cards that entitle them to get employment under 100 days under the NREGA scheme. The movement negotiated with the panchayat presidents and helped them to get job cards.

1. Jeyalakshmi w/o Murugan, Alathur
2. Mariammal w/o Ezhumalai, Alathur
3. Kuppu w/o Samikannu, Mattavettu
4. Panchatha w/o Settu, Mel Palur
5. Sivasankari w/o Ramesh, Vasudevanpattu

6.8. Other schemes availed

Types of resource mobilization	No. of persons covered
Community certificate	30
Income Certificate	14
House patta	7
Voter ID	17
Ration card	5
NREGA Card	23
Disabled peoples	6
ANC Schemes	5

7. Promotion of Children's Club

- Children's Club formed in all villages.
- Children's Club students were attending the Grama Sabha Meetings and were discuss about their needs like playing materials as well as their were planting the seeds
- SC Streets were cleaned by the Children's Club students
- Kitchen garden were formed
- Children's Parliament were conducted

Summer camp organized for the children's club members. They were given training on health and hygiene, child rights, environmental protection and other important themes. Evening school programs.

8. Formation of Environment Protection Forum

In all the twenty villages initiatives have been taken for promotion of Farmer's club, Women's club, Children's Club and youth club. Potential members are identified and enrolled in sangams (groups).

Summer camp organized for the children's club members. They were given training on health and hygiene, child rights, environmental protection and other important themes.

9. Adolescent Life Skill Education

Life skill trainings were imparted to adolescent children. Permission was sought at the school levels and clubs were formed at school levels. These children were trained on cleanliness, health aspects and other important issues that are concerned for the children.

The children are now respecting elders and the language they use is respectful.

Conclusion :-

RWDS has successfully implemented the programs as planned and have supported the people to get sensitized on the issues required to make them as law abiding citizens and to avail the government schemes. RWDS has supported poor women to increase their income through economic development programs. We have been associating with government departments, health departments and are thankful for everyone who have been of immense support to us.