

# Annual Report

**Submitting organization:** Rural Women Development Society (RWDS) Tiruvannamalai

**Reporting Period:** April 2015 to March 2016

## **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. 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 backdrop that RWDS has been working in the district of Tiruvannamalai. The organization has been working in 40 villages of Puhupalayam and Kalasapakkam blocks in Tiruvannamalai district.

## **Activities carried out during the reporting year**

### **1. Livelihood Promotion For Poor Women**

#### **i) Skill Training**

Towards supporting the families to be self employed driving skill was imparted to 20 Students from the operational area. The beneficiaries belong to the poor families.

#### **ii) Income Generation Activities**

In the month of May 5 members each were selected as beneficiaries. Totally 35 members were selected from these seven villages and they were given a rotation support money of Rs 7000/- each. They have invested the money in small entrepreneurs and have started functioning.

Regular monthly meetings are being held in these villages and monitoring visits are made by the staff to these villages for ensuring that the money is properly being utilized and for guidance.

#### **The list of beneficiaries:-**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Name Of Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
1	Ms.Santha W/o Subramani	Kalaraipadi	Cow
2	Ms.Unnamalai W/o Ramasamy	Kalaraipadi	Goat
3	Ms.Sulochana W/o Theerthamalai	Kalaraipadi	Goat
4	Ms.Viji W/o Krishnan	Kalaraipadi	Goat
5	Ms.Silambu W/o Chennan	Kalaraipadi	Petty shop
6	Ms.Vellachi W/o Joseph	Sathiyapuram	Cow
7	Ms.Bakkiyalakshmi W/o Immanuvel	Sathiyapuram	Goat

8	Ms.Vedhamani W/o Kannaiyan	Sathiyapuram	Goat
9	Ms.Santhi W/o Arasu	Sathiyapuram	Goat
10	Ms.Chindamani W/o Gunasundharam	Sathiyapuram	Mobile Recharge
11	Ms.Parameswari W/o Ravi	Masher	Cow
12	Ms.Alamelu W/o Goil Pillai	Masher	Cow
13	Ms.Kannagi W/o Rajkumar	Masher	Petty shop
14	Ms.Pudural W/o Settu	Masher	Goat
15	Ms.Valli W/o Mathi	Masher	Cow
16	Ms.Valarmathi W/o Shankar	Nayambadi	Goat
17	Ms.Chennamal W/o Govindasamy	Nayambadi	Cow
18	Ms.Punitha W/o Venkatesan	Nayambadi	Cow
19	Ms.Chitrarasi W/o Aeniyar	Nayambadi	Petty shop
20	Ms.Vellachi W/o Subramani	Nayambadi	Goat
21	Ms.Sangeetha W/o Murugan	Nammiyandhal	Power machine
22	Ms.Chitra W/o Ganesan	Nammiyandhal	Cow
23	Ms.Alamelu W/o Chinnakannu	Nammiyandhal	Cow
24	Ms.Mallika W/o Kannayan	Nammiyandhal	Cow
25	Ms.Anthoniammal W/o Kuppusamy	Nammiyandhal	Cow
26	Ms.Anitha Dhayavu Mary W/o Albert	Ponnankollai	Chicken meat shop
27	Ms.Josephin mary W/o Periyamayagam	Ponnankollai	Power machine
28	Ms.Arockiyamary W/o Selvaraj	Ponnankollai	Power machine
29	Ms.Jothi W/o Chinnappan	Ponnankollai	Cow
30	Ms.Stella mary W/o Vincent	Ponnankollai	Cow
31	Ms.Geetha W/o Kali	Nagapadi	Cow
32	Ms.Rasathi W/o Chakkarai	Nagapadi	Provision shop
33	Ms.Chennamal W/o Kasi	Nagapadi	Cow
34	Ms.Jothi W/o Chinnakuzandhai	Nagapadi	Cow
35	Ms.Neelavathi W/o kuzhandhai	Nagapadi	Cow

### **iii. Goat Rotation Livelihood Support for Rural Poor Women**

#### 1. Goat Rearing

102 women from the operational areas were supported under the scheme of goat rotation. Under this scheme the beneficiaries have to return a lamb (after their goats deliver) to a new beneficiary.

#### 2. Cow

65 women were provided with support for milch cows.

## **2. Socio Economic Empowerment of Dalit Women :-**

### **1. Livelihood Promotion for poor women**

176 women from the Self Help groups from Annai Velankanni Nagar, Malli SHG Pudhupattu, Kanji, Aritharimangalam, Gangampattu, Melpalur, Alliyandhal, Chinna Narasinga nallur, Oranthavady, Ponnankollai, New Aritharimangalam and Nagapadi, participated and benefitted from the capacity building programs organized on 8.3.2016, 28.3.2016, 31.3.2016, 5.4.2016, 1.3.2016, 2.3.2016, 7.3.2016, 25.5.2016 and 26.5.2016.

The following themes were covered in the capacity building program:

- Schemes for economic enhancement
- Societal analysis and need for economic enhancement
- Importance of Savings
- Motivation for involving in income generating ventures
- Violence Against Women's
- Government Schemes

Discussion was held on the importance of savings, maintaining records in groups, book keeping and function of SHGs, and evolving resolutions and decisions in teams. Information was shared about the available government schemes. They were advised and guided to avail the schemes of getting books and notebooks, scholarships, nutrition meals, evening tuitions, marriage support money and gold schemes, Old age pension, single women support money and other schemes

They internalized that women need to enhance their economic base through small income generating activities which in turn would bring them respect and recognition.

#### **4. Child Development :-**

##### **i. Observation of Special day**

Children's Day was celebrated in Kanchi, in which the children from the surrounding villages participated. The duties and responsibilities of children were shared with them. The children were motivated to attend schools and pursue their education. The participant children were asked to share the information with other children and to support them to continue their education. They were guided to ensure their villages neat and clean. Knowledge on environmental protection was shared with them.

##### **ii. Summer Camp**

A summer camp was organized for the children's club members. They were given training on health and hygiene, child rights, environmental protection and other important themes. The camp was a venue to bring out their extracurricular talents. The children mingled with each other and keenly participated in the competitions. All children were provided with mementos as token of appreciation.

##### **iii. Play Material**

45 Children's Club members were provided with play materials for indoor games. Chess boards and carom boards were given to them village wise.

#### **iv. Value Based Agriculture Promotion among School Students**

Special permission was availed from the officials to interact with the students on the importance of organic farming. The avenue was utilized to motivate the children to promote vegetable gardens at their homes and in the schools. In one school the children have adopted the practice.

#### **v. Adolescent Life Skill Education**

Young girls who continuously face challenges of lives had an opportunity to gain abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable them to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. They were shared knowledge on psycho-social skills that determine valued behavior and include reflective skills such as problem-solving and critical thinking to personal skills such as self-awareness, and to interpersonal skills. This was intended to help them to acquire qualities of self-esteem, sociability and tolerance, to action competencies to take action and generate change, and to capabilities to have the freedom to decide what to do and who to be.

#### **vi. Functional English**

Basic skills required for communication in English were imparted to a team of girls. This was based on developed modules by experts.

### **5. Community Development :-**

#### **a. Formation of Village Unit**

Formation of Self Groups in every village was continued. New SHGs were formed at the village level. 20 new units were formed in this tyear.

## **b. Training Programme:-**

Women from Self Help groups were short listed to participate in the capacity building programmes. They were divided into clusters and were provided with the trainings. The participants were given training on 5 modules.

The modules were:

1. Introduction to the project and the need for SHGs
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 loans.

### **ii) Leader's Training**

Special trainings were organized for the women leaders. Training was given on the importance of utilizing the grama sabha to access their basic amenities and to keep their village clean. Four trainings were held for insisting the need for the with focus on duties and responsibilities of citizens. The training also shared knowledge on constitutional rights.

### **iii) Farmers' Training**

Four trainings were organized at Kanchi training center. Two experts from agricultural department, viz. Mr. Saravanan from BDO office Pudhupalayam and Mr. Prabhakaran , Viswanathapuram facilitated the trainings.

## **6 Special days :-**

### **i. 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.

### **ii. May Day**

The workers gathered in a meeting in Kanchi to commemorate the importance of May Day. They expressed that the day marked the importance of workers and it was an acceptance for their hard labour,

**iii. World Health Day:** The World Health day was celebrated in Tiruvannamali. The importance of prevention was stressed among the participants who had gathered from the surrendering villages of the district capital.

## **8. Health Related Activities :-**

### **1. ANC & PNC Prog**

Anti Natal care support and post natal care programs are being continued in the rural areas of the district with the support of the primacy health centers.

## **2. Adolescent Life Skill Education Schools & Villages**

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.

## **9. Exposure Programme : -**

### **i. Farmers Exposure**

On September 2 and 3, 2015, seven women were taken for an exposure to Auraville, Pondicherry where they had a learning exposure. They had an opportunity to see and learn organic farming, specifically about various methods of cultivation, seed selection, usage of bio gas, bio fertilizers etc. They came back and demonstrated few of their learning at field levels. Now their harvest is on the verge of harvest. The leaders had an opportunity to interact with the farmer Thomas who has been involved in organic farming for the past twenty five years. At the end of the program the farmers expressed that they could learn from the exposure and it instilled confidence among them to involve without any apprehension

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.

## **ii. People's Exposure**

A select team of women were taken for exposure to organic collective farms in Tiruvallur and Nagapattinam districts.

## **iii. Staff Exposure**

The staff accompanied the people in all exposure trips and thus had the opportunity to learn as the people.

## **10. Sustainable Agriculture:-**

### **i. Formation of Collective Women Farming**

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. Under the scheme Vermi rearing programme, bio fertilizers preparation, seeds and saplings, exposure programme for farmers, sri-rice cultivation & demonstration plot were promoted among them. At Alliyanthal village 13 families have started to prepare vermin compost and are cultivating the same. 50 families have adapted organic farming and have started harvesting.

### **ii. Women's Farmers Training**

Trainings were organized for women farmers at Kanchi. The trainings helped the beneficiaries to learn different methods of cultivation being followed. The Feasibility and Sustainability of Share Model of Collective Farming in Relation to Women's Empowerment was discussed.

### **iii. Preparation of Bio Fertilizer**

Field demonstration and demonstration of bio manure preparation were shown to the women farmers. Five groups were selected and were shown the methods. All the groups were given vermin compost tanks, earthworms and other inputs. Groups are now preparing bio manure. Five groups were given drums for preparation of Pancha Kavyam

### **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.