

Development

March 2014

Monthly Development update from DHAN Collective

Matters

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Event

International Women's Day Celebration



The International Women's Day Celebration was held by Kalanjiam Mutual Movement at the premises of DHAN Foundation on 8th March, 2014. The event had a participation of more than 300 kalanjiam members and leaders. Many issues that women face from birth to death is discussed and resolutions were taken to protect women from such issues. Apart from this the celebrations were organized locally by different regions under the Kalanjiam program.



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From the Editors' Desk

Dear Readers,

Greetings from DHAN Foundation.

Beed District in Maharashtra is known for sugarcane cutting workers, who often used to migrate to Western Maharashtra and Northern Karnataka. The issues faced by the poor migrants are presented in the article Migration issues among Sugarcane cutters in Beed District. Preserving traditional local seeds is done by native farmers in many villages. An article on different activities by DHAN Karunai Illam is also featured in this issue. An attempt has been made to understand how the people of Jawadhu hills, preserve their seeds through the social network study which is featured in the article 'Social Seed Network study in Jawadhu hills. Women panchayats leaders can perform well if they are enabled and right opportunities are provided to them which are very well revealed by the story of Ms. Logasundari, president of Thenoor panchayat in Madurai District.

International women's day celebrations were held by different federations under Kalanjiam Mutual Movement and Panchayat programs. The updates of the events are presented in this issue. A workshop on climate change and role of water managers was held at the premises of DHAN Foundation, during which many declarations were taken on climate change issues and role of water managers in protecting the water resources. A brief about the workshop is also presented in this issue.

The readers are welcome to give their suggestions and feedbacks on the articles featured in the development matters. They can send their mails to ghancdc@ghan.org

Happy reading!

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Migration issues among sugarcane cutters in Beed district

Rajan P *

Beed District of Maharashtra has vast areas under sugarcane cultivation and the migrants who work as sugarcane cutters in those fields face many issues. This district along with Tirupur in Tamilnadu is taken for piloting the new theme - 'Migration and Development'. To understand the area, community and the developmental issues of sugar cane cutters, a visit to Beed region was made between 26-29.06.2012. Field visit to three villages, focussed group discussion, interaction with middlemen (Labour Contractor), NGOs and local field team of DHAN were made to understand the context and the issues of the migrants.



Access to good health services is almost nonexistent for the poor.

About Beed District

The Maharashtra state is geographically divided into four regions – Konkan, Western Maharashtra, Vidharbha and Marathwada. Beed district comes under Marathwada region of Maharashtra. Even today 75 percent of the people are living in villages and 67 percent of them are below poverty line. This region lies in a rain shadow and consequently has scanty and unpredictable rainfall. People face moderate drought for every 3-4 years and severe drought once in every 10 years. Livelihood systems are fractured and over 5-6 lakhs people migrate annually to work in the sugarcane cutting industry.

The Beed district in Marathwada is the most drought-prone even in this dry region. It is one of the India's backward districts. Irrigation facilities are poor and they are not likely to improve in the near future. Crops like sorghum and cotton, which can be cultivated with less water, are grown here. The region is ridden with poverty and illiteracy. Perennial drought has resulted in unemployment, shortage of food and water, resulting into endemic poverty. People in Beed are caught in a vicious cycle of debt-poverty-illiteracy. This vicious circle adversely affects all social indicators-health, infant mortality, education and violence against women.

On the other hand the Western Maharashtra flourishes with abundant irrigation facilities, which favours sugarcane cultivation making it as a sugar belt of Maharashtra. Though it constitutes only 3 percent of area under cultivation in the state 60 percent of the state's irrigation whereas the irrigation cover is as low as 6 percent in Marathwada region.

Political patronage and vote bank politics rule the sugarcane belt. The Western Maharashtra region which enjoys patronage of politicians witnessed rapid growth in irrigational facilities, access to loans and other basic infrastructure whereas Vidharbha and Marathwada are regions are comparatively less developed. This has led to regional disparity in agricultural development affecting living standards of people. Increased seasonal migration is forced because of such defective policies of the government and is most closely associated with the capitalist development of rural agricultural production in this area.

Migrant workers and their status

Beed region is known for its sugarcane cutting workers. Since 1972, they are migrating for sugar cane cutting

to Western Maharashtra and Northern Karnataka where more number of sugarcane factories are located. In Western Maharashtra alone there are 192 factories. These migrant workers who are skilled at cutting sugarcane get exploited by labour contractors and rich farmers; they work in atrocious conditions for meagre compensation. These workers are going for sugarcane cutting for eight months from Oct to May.

The hamlets in the region are mostly caste based with poor infrastructure facilities such as drinking water, school, healthcare, road and transport, banks etc. The workers in the villages have very less livelihood options; so they depend mostly on agriculture. The quality of drinking water is poor. Less than 40 percent of the houses have bathrooms and only three percent houses have latrines.

High dropout rate among school children prevail here. Especially girls dropout is more than the boys. Bombay High Court has asked the Maharashtra Govt to open schools in rural areas to provide free primary education to the children of migrant labourers who work in sugarcane fields. There are only 30 schools for migrant children in the state's 198 sugar factories.

The highly organized sugar industry keeps the labourers unorganized. No labour laws are implemented to protect their rights although minimum wages act, contract labour act, money lending act and workmen's compensation act are applicable. Most of the government programmes are not reaching the community. The government agencies do not have adequate information about the migration and its issues.

Findings of the visit

1. The mere sight of the village, housing and other infrastructures such as roads and transport itself reveal the severity of the poverty. The houses were covered by tin sheets on all the four sides and they are barely six feet height. There is no bathroom or toilet facility in the houses. Even the available houses are temporary structures made with locally available materials like coconut leaves.
2. Of the three villages visited two villages had people from same community and one was a multicasite village. Common village events are held rarely for which household tax is collected. There is no common fund for the village to meet any emergency expenditure. Caste differentiation is visible with socially depressed community living separately. There is no evidences of intercaste marriages.
3. Marriage expenses are high compared to their living standards ranging from one lakh to three lakhs which is given as dowry to the bridegroom. Investment in jewel is less and most of the women are seen without gold jewels. Most of the expenditure is on food and arrangements for marriage.
4. Drinking water is obtained from common hand pumps and in some cases from wells. The same water is used for domestic purpose. In some villages efforts were taken to collect tax from houses to install hand pumps
5. Agriculture is predominantly rainfed and only a few rich farmers have dug out borewells or wells for irrigation. There are no traditional water bodies



such as tanks or farm ponds in the villages to harvest rain water. The agricultural season is from June to September during which rainfed crops like cotton and sorghum are grown. There is no other livelihood option than farming. There is no milch animal in the villages visited. Other livestock rearing is also rare

6. People are financially excluded from the mainstream financial institutions. The money lender or the labour contractor exploit this situation and charge exorbitant rate of interest as high as 60 percent. There is also no indigenous saving system.
7. Both men and women go as labourer for cutting sugarcane. An advance of ₹ 70,000/- is given for a couple. Depending on the number of working persons in a family the advance amount gets increased. At times if they are not performing their task as expected, their advance amount will be reduced. The advance is received in cash and there is no formal agreement between the labour contractor and the middle men.
8. The labourers are receiving the amount during the agricultural season; they are using this amount for agriculture, marriage, repayment to money lenders, family events or for alcohol consumption. They are utilising the considerable amount unproductively. Some families are spending lavishly.
9. The labourers have to cut 350 tons of sugarcane during the season (October to May). Everyday a couple has to cut two tons. So every couple has to engage themselves in the sugarcane cutting for 175 days to reach 350 tons. If the labourers are cutting lesser tons then the middle men will reduce the amount accordingly. The next year advance will be paid after deducting the previous year shortfall.
10. The factories are providing the daily sheet/information about their team performance; the copy will be given to the middle men, from this he will calculate the harvest of tons and its labour.
11. The factories are providing ₹ 190/ton for cutting and loading. The market rate for cutting the cane is ₹ 350 to ₹ 400. They are paid 40 to 50 percent less than the market rate. At the same time, each couple has to spend 12 to 15 hours for cutting and loading. That means, they are working additionally ½ a shift for which there is no payment or the exploitation will be more than 60-65 percent.

12. The middle men are getting ₹ 35 - ₹ 50 per ton as a commission from the factory. For one couple, he is getting commission of min of 1 lakhs to 1.5 lakhs in a season. The factory and the middle men (labour contractor) are making formal agreement for engaging the labourers, for that they are getting the payments in three instalments from the factory. These middle men have associations at block level and district level to deal with factory.
13. Nine couples are considered as one team for easy management and for loading. They have to stay back in the field till loading gets completed, which depends on the arrival of the vehicle. So these couples have to live in the cane field itself with their children and other belongings. There is no working hours; no decent living conditions; they just live in temporary shelters in the sugarcane fields. Their living conditions are mostly vulnerable to snake bites, fire etc. During the working time also they encounter accidents.
14. Because of their working conditions and non availability of school facilities their children are not getting education. Also, there is no medical facility for them especially for women and children.
15. Even though there are many government schemes for sugarcane cutters to provide health, educational facilities, those schemes are beyond their reach. More over there is no awareness about the schemes and programmes of the government.

Way forward:

Organising the unorganised, facilitating mainstream linkage, social security, education, health, entitlements and awareness on their rights are the priority areas to work with these migrant population.

Building opportunities to promote institutions and intervention in the places of origin and destination of migrants, available schemes and programmes with government/mainstream institutions, creating legitimate space for the federation and region in establishing linkages with factory and sugarcane cutters in order to improve their wages, awareness on their rights, ensuring entitlements and services are the areas to be explored further.

DHAN Karunai Illam

Gomathimurugan G*

Karunai Illam, at Nilakottai was initiated by a compassionate tourist from Netherland, Ms. Jean Watson who came on a soul searching exercise to India. The partnership with DHAN for management support happened in 2007, and since then DHAN Karunai illam diversified its activities. The DHAN Karunai Illam for destitute and orphan children, Karunai-DHAN Nursery and Primary School and Life center that provides skill trainings meets the needs of the children and youth in Nilakottai.



The Genesis

Jean Watson, who came to India from New Zealand, thirty years ago in 1984 as a tourist in a soul searching process, found that her life had a definite purpose of serving deprived and orphan children in India. During her travel from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, she visited Gandhiji-Kasturibaji Children's home where she got the acquaintance of the couple Mr. Subbaiah and Ms. Mariamma. Jean came back once again in 1987 for a stay in Kanyakumari during which the couple expressed that they were moving to their native place Nilakottai, in Dindukal District and requested Jean also to visit the place. Jean so visited Nilakottai for the first time in 1987, without knowing that the place was going to be a part of her life for the rest of the years.

During the visit, many women who saw her rushed and a woman enquired Subbaiah something in Tamil. When Jean wondered what they are so curious about Mr. Subbaiah replied that "The woman enquired whether you are a Doctor, since she her baby is Sick." Jean felt sorry for not being a Doctor during which Mr. Subbaiah expressed that there are many orphan and destitute children in and around Nilakottai, but there is no home to support them.

Jean did not hesitate and said Subbaiah " We can start a Children's Home. You start the work for the same in Nilakottai and meanwhile I will go back to New Zealand to arrange funds for the same. Thus the seed for Karunai Illam was sown and it was initiated in 25th September, 1987 with seven children in a rented house.

Jean initially supported the Illam by contributing her own money and later as the Illam and its needs grew, she formed Karunai Illam Trust ((KIT) at New Zealand which started sourcing fund for the Illam. Later in 2006 problems begin to crop up since Mr. Subbaiah and his associates started acting with vested interest. Jean who got worried and suspicious investigated the issue and decided to seek the support of another NGO which can take over the Illam and run. She came to know about DHAN Foundation in Madurai and contacted them through email. DHAN came forward to extend its support and thus the new partnership got established. DHAN Karunai Illam was thus formed in 2007.

What started as a Children's home, later extended to establish a skill training centre (LIFE centre- Livelihood enhancement through functional education) for the local and also a school.

The Vision

The vision of Karunai Illam is to free young and disadvantaged people from the limitations of poverty and ignorance so that they can find satisfaction and enrichment in their lives and express their full potential.

Facilities Offered by the Illam

Karunai illam currently offers following services to the local community

- Free boarding for destitute children at a children's home (DHAN Karunai Illam) so that they can attend nearby schools;

* Mr. Gomathimurugan G, Team Leader, DHAN Foundation

- A model nursery and primary school to give local children a quality education alternative, utilizing creative methods to encourage their natural talents;
- Fees and boarding costs towards tertiary education for academically able former students of the DHAN Karunai Illam

DHAN Karunai Illam

The Karunai illam which started with just seven children currently has forty-three children. The deserving children are chosen through strict screening process. The criteria employed for the selection process are

- The child should be from a poor family
- Should have the willingness to learn
- Single parent / Orphan children / HIV orphans

The admission process is done in the months of April-May every year. Food and accommodation is given at free of cost to the children. Education is given to them through private or government aided schools. Karunai Illam Trust supports for funding and local donations are also encouraged.

Facilities given

The children were given balanced nutritious foods and inclusion of small millets in the diet for enhanced nutrition is done. There will be a daily morning prayer, reading and sharing among the children. The children were also exposed to other activities like building their cultural talents viz. dance, music and folk art and they used to conduct their own cultural event once in a month. Training on arts to enhance their creative skills are also provided.

A yearly camp is also organized for them during which training on Yoga, Health and hygiene, Heritage walk,



Career Counseling and agricultural training were given. The children are also given opportunity to expose their talent during the camp. The boys and girls have separate hostel facilities and a separate caretaker. The accommodation was earlier done in a small place with thatched roof which was upgraded to tinned roof later.

For providing accommodation to the poor children a building was purchased in 1991. The facilities in the house were improved later toilets, bathrooms and dining hall coming into place. The Kitchen got completely rebuilt to suit the needs of the Illam. The girl children were presently housed here. A separate building was constructed for boys hostel.

By 2003-04 an additional plot was purchased opposite to the illam in which two large dormitories and care-givers room on a second storey was constructed which housed the boys. Toilets and bathrooms are also constructed. Later the boys hostel was constructed in a coconut grove owned by the Illam. Presently the boys are residing in the newly constructed illam. The boys hostel was converted in Karunai-Dhan Nursery school by 6th June,2008.

Karunai-DHAN Nursery and Primary School

This school was initiated during the year 2008-2010. This is a activity based rural model school where Play-way method of learning was implemented which sustains the interest of students and facilitates better learning. The school currently as twenty employees with Mr.Ragavan, managing the school. A nominal fee is charged for the students and currently there are 270 students enrolled. The school is now self-sustained.

A new building for the school was constructed in the year 2011-12 for the school and there is a plan for constructing additional classrooms

LIFE center

The center for Livelihood enhancement through functional education (LIFE) was inaugurated in the DHAN Karunai Illam premises itself by 10th September,2010 by Ms.Vasugi, the District Collector, Dindugal, in the presence of Ms.Jean Watson, Mr.M.P.Vasimalai, Executive Director of DHAN Foundation and Stree Sakthi Purashkar Chinnapillai, Kalanjiam Mutual Movement. The center so far has offered many courses of which three courses are held regularly and the other on need basis.

The following skill trainings are offered:

Regular trainings

- Tailoring-Basic course, Embroidery, Zardhosi works and Saree Printing
- Beautician- Basic course, Advance course, Aroma therapy
- Computer courses- Diploma in computer application, Certificate course in computer application, Summer course for Kids

Other trainings

Jewelry making; Mobile phone repair; Mushroom cultivation; Jam/Jelly preparation; Simple chemicals; Bags-handbags and others. Government certified trainers were employed for giving training on above skills. Apart from this there are four regular staffs for this center. A nominal charge is done for all these trainings. Apart from this fund support for this center has come through various schemes and organizations like NABARD, Modular Education scheme, Canara Bank and ICDS. Yearly four hundred to five hundred students get trained through this center. So far 2500 persons were trained on various activities through this center. The center is now self-sustainable and able to meet its running cost.

Marching ahead

The generosity and charitable mind of Jean Watson, led to the growth of this institution over years into a full-

fledged home for poor and orphaned children. However the Illam encountered a problem when her local associates running the home started misappropriating the funds.

Jean dissolved the partnership and later roped in DHAN Foundation as a partnering NGO. The illam which was functioning as Mahatma Karunai Illam was rechristened as DHAN-Karunai Illam.

The Karunai Illam has enabled many children to go far higher studies and settle in respectable jobs. The silver jubilee function of the Illam held in September, 2012 held symbolizes that the Karunai Illam will continue to support more children in the coming years in its way towards the Golden jubilee function.

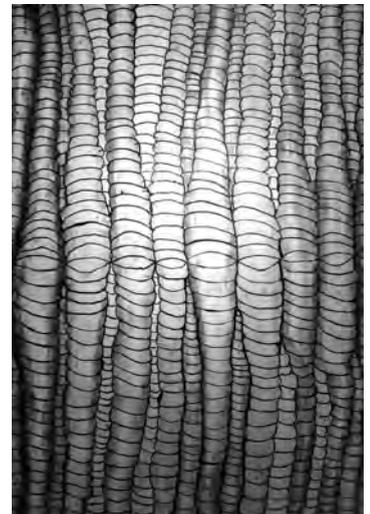
Jean rendered the financial support for this organization individually and later roped in many of her friends and associates in New Zealand. They operate in the name of Karunai Illam Trust and provide continued support and assistance.

DHAN Karunai Illam is now under the process of constructing a unified hostel building for boys and girls for which the foundation stone was laid in October 2013.

Their new local partner DHAN Foundation has been rendering all their support and guiding them for new initiatives. Karunai Illam will continue to shower its love and affection, for the poor and orphaned children.

Children's Fest

Children's fest in which inmates and students of DHAN Karunai Illam, Nilakottai participated was organized on 8th March, 2014 at DHAN plaza hall by evening hours. The children exhibited their skills in folk arts like oyilaatam, street play and other dances which enthralled the viewers. Apart from this the various art and handicrafts work done by the children were displayed in the venue. Games through which science facts are explained also got enacted by the students. The participants appreciated the efforts of DHAN Karunai Illam and also were all in praise for the children who exhibited their talents.



Social Seed Network study in Jawadhu Hills

Karthikeyan M & Ramesh S*

Abstract

Preserving the local land races is important in the context of biodiversity and food security. Understanding the dynamics of local seed systems- both formal and informal, importance given by the local people to maintain purity of local land races and the seed exchange and network pattern is important to preserve this diversity. This study conducted in Jawadhu hills, Thiruvanamalai District ,one of the project sites of Revalorizing small millets in South Asia (RESMISA), reveals that there prevails a loose informal network in exchange of seeds like Little millet, Finger millet, Pearl millet, Horse gram and other crops. Farmers usually retain their own seeds for next season and rarely exchange. But no precaution is taken by them to ensure the quality and purity of seeds. The nodal farmers who play a crucial role in a normal informal seeds exchange system are absent in this area and exchange occurs between any two persons in this closely knitted community.

Background

Jawadhu hills are an extension of Eastern ghats, located in northern Tamilnadu. There are eleven panchayat villages under Jawadhu Block, which comes under Kalasapakkam taluk of Thiruvannamalai District. DHAN Foundation has been implementing Revalorizing small millets in south asia project in four panchayats in this block, as this block is an important small millet growing area. The Little Millet (samai) is grown predominantly in this area under rainfed conditions, apart from finger millet (ragi) , Horse gram (kollu), Niger(Payellu), Maize (makka cholam) and other crops. Under irrigated conditions paddy is grown as the main crop. The people living here are Malayali tribes to grow Proso millet (Pani varagu) and Kodo millet (varagu) also before two decade which are not cultivated at present. Even the area under small millets has come down drastically in the last three decades. Local land

racess of little millet (Samai) , both short and long duration are grown here generation after generation. Samai which once remained as a staple food in their diet got replaced by rice. However people continue to grow samai because it is easy to cultivate, incur less cultivation cost, suitable under rainfed condition and also has a good market value.

The total of physical, organizational and institutional components, their actions and interactions, that determine seed supply and use, in quantitative and qualitative terms at a closely knitted social structure is called the social seed network. Such localized seed systems differ from formal seed systems subjected to legislation and regulation and often the source of new improved varieties) in that these traditional systems have developed naturally over time in response to the demands for seeds among the farming community. Farmers hence have the practise of using their own seeds for cultivation year after year and exchange seeds if there is a need. Also in the present day context they have the opportunity to source new seeds from elsewhere, which if performs well get distributed among the local community through informal means.

The social seed network study was conducted in Jawadhu block to know how the seed distribution takes place among farmers with respect to little millet (samai) and also in other crops.

Social Seed Network

The ways that farmers obtain seed are as old as agriculture, and most small-scale farmers in developing countries routinely save their seed from one harvest to the next. Nowadays, some 60-70 per cent of seed used by these farmers is still saved onfarm. Most of the remaining seed is obtained off-farm, from local sources (Louwaars, 1994; Cromwell, 1996a).

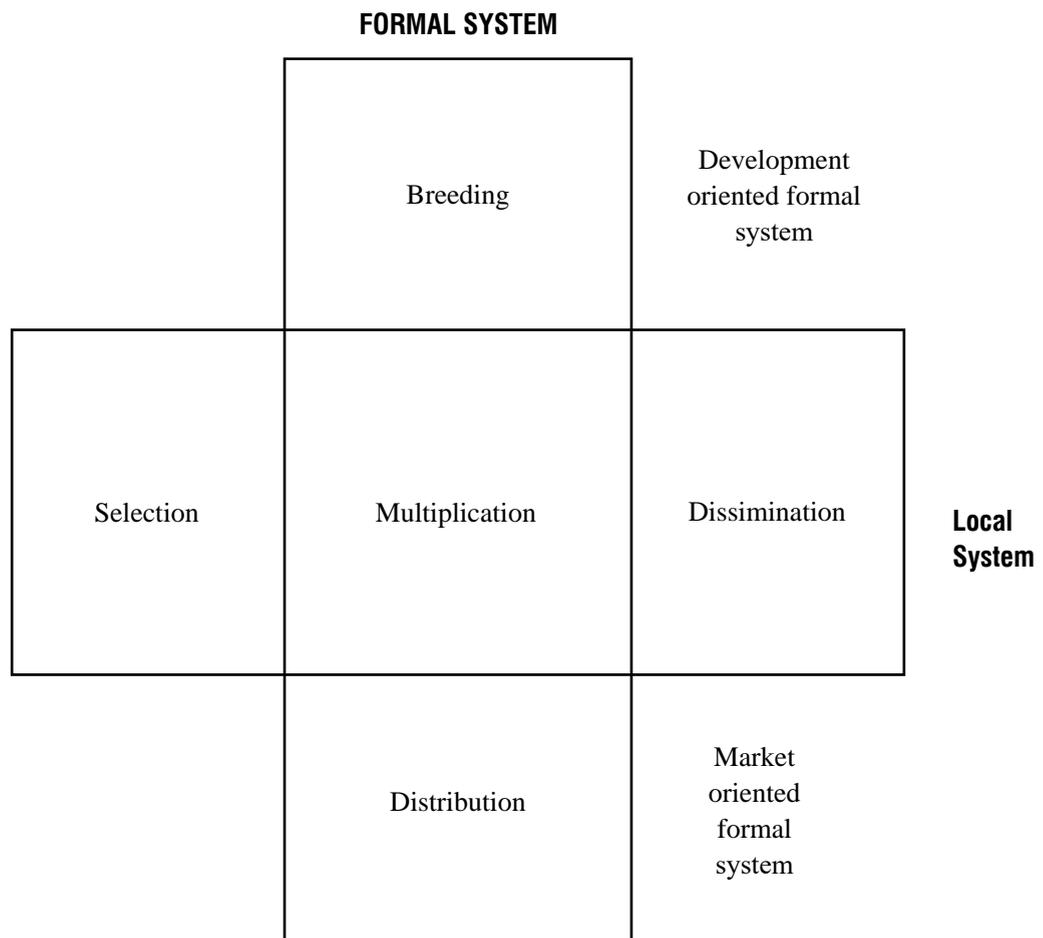
Local traditional seed systems are characterized by a low level of organization and institutional development.

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They lack formal quality control and are not subject to seed trade regulation. Seed is multiplied without any generation control. Other than from their own farm, farmers usually obtain seed from neighbours or from local traders known to them (H.van Amstel et al,1995). A major factor distinguishing formal and local seed supplies is that the former is vertically organized, whereas the latter system can be considered horizontal. Local seed supply consists of basically the same components: selection, production and diffusion, but contrary to the vertically organized formal systems, organized in a horizontal manner. However, much importance is attached to seed production over the selection and diffusion process. The horizontal pattern of local seed supply systems seems to imply that they are most suitable. Local seed systems are generally considered sustainable because they have operated throughout the 10,000 years before formal seed supply systems emerged in the late 19th century. Unfortunately, Local seed supply systems are slow in

responding to changes in ecological or social conditions. A local landrace cannot be adapted to the introduction of chemical fertilizers in only a few generations without the introduction of new genes. Similarly, the genetic variation within landraces may not be large enough to cope with declining soil fertility levels due to pressures on the land. The challenge for developing alternative seed systems is thus to optimize system sustainability (Louwaars,1995).

Local seed supply systems may thus significantly contribute to the conservation of crop genetic resources in farmers' fields. Though genetic conservation in gene banks has saved a lot of genetic variation (genes and gene complexes) from extinction, it is now accepted that such methods of germplasm conservation are not able to solve the global problem of disappearance of crop genetic diversity. In situ germplasm conservation has received considerable attention recently (Brush 1991; Cooper et al. 1992; Friis-Hansen 1993). However controversies



Formal and Local seed system. (Source: CGPRT centre / publication no.32)

do exit over long-term sustainability of such in situ methods. Thus, sustaining and supporting local seed supply systems is one of the major components of in situ conservation of crop genetic resources.

The seed selection and preservation practices among the farming community tend to vary greatly. While some farmers take at most care in ensuring the quality and purity of seeds, there are also evidences where much attention is not paid for ensuring quality and purity of seeds.

A IFPRI report “ Local Market, Local Varieties” says that liberalization of the Indian seed sector in the 1990s favored dryland cereals and legumes, with little impact on research and formal distribution channels for minor millets. Currently, the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu lead in crop improvement research on minor millets. However, the range of improved varieties is narrow. Private companies show little interest in developing new varieties, due to their lack of commercial importance and the limited scope for developing new hybrids (Melinda Smale et al, 2009). Seed systems in minor millets are mostly autarkic, farmers depend on their own seeds or other farmers in their community for seed (Latha Nagarajan, 2009) . The studies by the Centre for Indian Knowledge systems in its initiative of Revalorizing rainfed agriculture in Jawadhu hills has observed that in the last decade there has been a decline in diversity of millets grown in the area, while the crops like red, black and green gram lost their importance and not cultivated. Groundnut and gingelly cultivation has decreased by 50%. Livestocks such as cattle, goat and sheep have declined by 10% whereas buffaloes by 90% (CIKS,2012) . The detailed survey done on small millets has led to identification of 30 local varieties of small millets in Jawadhu hills (CIKS,2013). Another survey on uses, constraints and opportunities for small millets by MSSRF in Kolli Hills (Tamil Nadu), hosts a large genetic diversity of nutritious millets, farmers have been conserving about 21 landraces of these three millets for a long time. However the cultivation of these crops had been under increasing threat from tapioca, which was promoted as a cash crop by the local starch industry through a kind of contract farming (Bhag Mal et al, 2010).

Research Problem

To study the social seed network currently prevailing among tribes of Jawadhu hills with respect to small millets and other crops for ensuring sustainable farming by preservation of land races and supply of quality seeds

Objectives of the study

- To identify the local seed distribution practice and pattern with respect to little millet and other major crops grown in the area
- To know the types and varieties of crops grown by the community
- To know whether the varietal purity is maintained by the community
- To know the factors which influence the decision making pattern in selection of crops and varieties for cultivation
- To maintain and preserve the local landraces (in situ germplasm conservation) and to ensure biodiversity in the locality
- To find any progressive or innovative farmer who plays a key role in seed distribution

Type and Methodology

The research study was carried out in three selected panchayats of Jawadhu block, Kalasapakkam taluk, Thiruvannamalai district as a part of RESMISA (Revalorizing Small Millets In South Asia) project implemented in this site. A semi structured questionnaire was designed for the study to understand the seed distribution pattern among the farmers, specific seed selection practices if any and the terms under which the seeds get exchanged. The sample size was sixty with twenty samples for each panchayat. Both the random and snow ball sampling techniques were followed.

The seed distribution pattern of major crops grown in the area was studied. The focus was more on Little millet *Panicum sumatrense* (locally known as Samai) which was the predominant crop in the area followed by other crops like Finger millet *Eleusine coracana* (locally known as Kevuru) , Niger *Guizotia abyssinica* (payellu), Paddy *Oriza sativa* (Nellu), Maize *Zea mays* (makka cholam), Horse gram *Macrotyloma uniflorum* (Kollu), Pearl millet *Pennisetum glaucum*(Cumbu) and other crops.

Panchayat and Villages selected for study

S.No	Panchayat	Villages covered	Number of Samples
1	Kuttakarai	Kuttakarai Pattaraikadu	20
2	Nambiyampattu	Chinnaveerapattu Periyaveerapattu Nambiyampattu Pattarayan Kudisai Melkupusanur Pattanur	20
3	Kovillur	Kovillur Thombareddi Perungattur	20
Total		11	60

Outcomes of the study

1. Little Millet

- All varieties of Little millet sown are indigenous in nature except for a unknown variety which got introduced by traders and known as IR8 locally.
- Cittan samai, Perun samai (also known as Vellai samai), Kalman samai and Kolluthanan samai are the local names of Little millet indigenous varieties grown in the area of which Cittan samai is most popular.
- The Little millet crop is sown in rainfed conditions immediately after rainfall in the month of June-July.
- The long duration Little millet varieties like Kalman samai and Perunsamai were largely replaced by short duration Cittan samai by the farmers. This is due uncertainty in rainfall and also it facilitates growing of Horse gram and Niger as second crops.



- Traditionally Little millet crop used to be raised organically and farmers now started using chemical fertilizers due to non-availability of organic manure.

Preservation of Little millet seeds

- After harvesting, thrashing, winnowing and cleaning without any stubbles or stones the Little millet seeds are dried under sun for two to five days at the maximum, depending on the temperature and moisture in the seed. After that the seeds are stored in gunny bags and retained in the house.
- More than 90 % of the farmers do not execute caution to maintain purity of seeds. The same little millet meant for marketing and own consumption is used as seeds.
- The possibility of admixture of seeds is there if two or more varieties gets thrashed in the same thrashing flour.
- Each and every farmer retains his own seed for sowing next year. Since farmers sow little millet seedlings year after year without any gap, they usually use their own seeds.
- Exchange of seeds occur rarely and only for three reasons (I) if a farmer misses a crop during one year (II) if a farmer sense admixture of other varieties and (III) if there is a problem in germination.
- In Kuttakarai Panchayat, some of the farmers gave up cultivating their land during 2012 and also in 2013. If at all they have to cultivate Little millet

in 2014, they have to compulsorily borrow from neighbours, friends and relatives

- The exchange takes place only in an informal means between neighbours, friends and relatives. No single person could be identified as a nodal farmer during the survey, which is peculiar to the area.
- The seeds are exchanged only on loan basis. For every kilogram of Little millet a farmer borrows from a neighbour, he has to give back two kilograms after harvest. There is no formal agreement for this and the say of word is sufficient for such exchange.
- Farmers are satisfied with the existing varieties they cultivate either out of ignorance or out of less importance they give to the crop. However they are willing to try new improved varieties and their response to participatory varietal trial through the RESMISA project implemented in the area is good.

2. Finger Millet

- Finger millet is not a predominant crop in the area and yet sown by less than 20 % farmers.
- Perunkevuru and Muttan keveru are the two popular indigenous varieties of which Muttan Kevuru is widely cultivated.
- Two of the farmers have cultivated new improved variety of finger millet, Mr.Arichandran Kovillur who sourced it from Mr.Saminathan last year, Vedanthoppu who in turn sourced it from his nephew in Veerapanur five years ago. From the varietal description they gave the variety could be identified



as GPU 28, a popular high yielding finger millet variety developed by UAS, Bangalore and widely grown by farmers of Karnataka.

- The seed exchange pattern in finger millet is same as in the case of little millet and also the preservation practices too are similar with no exclusive care for quality seeds.

3. Pearl Millet

- Vella cholam is the local variety grown by majority of the farmers.
- Few farmers are cultivating a new improved variety the name of which could not be identified since the farmers call it by a different name “IR-8” locally.
- The seed exchange mechanism and preservation practices are similar to those of finger and pearl millet.

4. Paddy

- The farmers with irrigation source cultivate paddy. Contrast to the case of small millets new improved varieties supplied through agricultural department in Jamunamarathur and sourced from seed shops in Kalasapaakam and Thiruvannamalai are cultivated by majority of farmers. ADT-43 which is a short duration paddy variety is widely preferred. White ponni is the long duration variety grown. Local varieties like Bhavani which used to be cultivated once are almost extinct.
- A unknown improved variety sourced from Karnataka the tribal men who went as laborers to a tea estate there is cultivated by few farmers in Nambiyampattu panchayat and because of its good yield and price, the variety gets exchanged among farmers through loan system.
- Usually farmers retain the paddy seeds for two or three years and later source it from agricultural department or from seed shops to ensure quality. This pattern is different from normal informal means followed in the case of other crops. The reason may be the availability and supply of good quality seeds of paddy through agricultural department and by the seed shops in vicinity.

5. Horse gram and Niger

- The horse gram and Niger varieties grown in the area are indigenous in nature. There is only one single variety of horse gram and niger cultivated

traditionally by the farmers. It is sown in rainfed condition after the little millet crop gets harvested. Usually it is sown along with Niger called Pay ellu locally.

- The seed exchange and preservation practices are similar to that in the case of little millet.

6. Other crops

Coleus crop (a medicinal tuber crop) and Cotton (for hybrid seed production) are the two new crops introduced in the area as contract farming. The seeds are supplied by the private players who provide technical assistance and also buy back the product.

Inference from the study

The local seed system prevailing in Jawadhu hills is highly informal in nature, the exchange of major crops grown in the area occurring rarely that too between neighbours, friends and relatives. Most of the little millet and finger millet varieties are indigenous in nature with their unique characteristic feature. Yet, since the farmers exert less concern with respect to maintaining the purity of such varieties, there is a risk of these varieties losing their individuality in long run. However a different pattern is observed in case of paddy crop, where the farmer's source seeds of improved varieties from formal sources. With respect to paddy both informal and formal means of seed exchange occurs.

Another interesting feature is even in the informal system, no single farmer could be identified as a nodal farmer. The seed network structure is as such very loose and in fact there no formal network structure exists. The reason is the farmers retain their own seeds for sowing in the next season and rarely exchange.

The farmer's treat the farm output for consumption/trade and for seeds equally with no special attention to maintain purity. Lot of awareness and trainings are needed to these farmers to make them understand the genetic diversity of the local land races and to maintain their purity in the context of preserving biodiversity of small millets and thereby ensuring future food security.

The local land races of small millets identified should also be subjected to scientific analysis to characterize them and those which excel in their performance and productivity can be introduced to other areas through participatory varietal trial.

If proper intervention is not done to preserve the purity of local land races in Jawadhu, imminent threat is there to the diversity of millets grown in the area.

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Matriarchy proves effective in Local governance

Balu I*

Name : **Ms.Lokasundari**
 Age : 43
 Occupation : Panchayat President
 Education : BSc., (Maths)
 Born in : Madurai
 Husband name : Sonaimuthu, BSc., (Zoology)
 Occupation : Farmer

Thenoor Village panchayat is located in Madurai west union of Madurai District, Tamilnadu. This village is situated in the northern bank of the river Vaigai. During the October 2011, local body elections held in Tamilnadu, the Thenoor village Panchayat was reserved for the woman candidate. The Ex-President of Thenoor Panchayat, Mr.Sonaimuthu motivated his wife Ms.Lokasundari to contest the election.

Ms.Logasundari hailed from an orthodox family, which has restrictions for women to move out and mingle socially with the community. Ms.Logasundari had lot of reservations and apprehensions in contesting the election. However Mr.Sonaimuthu gave confidence and convinced her and she accepted to contest the election. Here relatives and neighbours questioned her about her capacity to manage the position and also started speaking that it is not good for a woman from an orthodox family to contest elections.

Ms.Logasundari replied them that she has taken this decision after a long thought and if there is any problem, she can very well get the support of her husband. During the election five women candidates contested for the post of President in Thenoor village and a heavy competition prevailed. The other contestants spent a huge amount upto five lakhs, but Ms.Lokasundari spent less than a lakh. Instead she met each and every individual family in the village and created an awareness not to get bribe for vote. She used to say ‘ Today if you get money and vote, tomorrow you have to pay for any benefits you expect from them, especially for getting entitlements’. Her way of approach was liked by the people and finally in the election Ms.Lokasundari won with a margin of 1308 votes. Ms.Lokasundari became the President of Thenoor Village Panchayat.



Ms.Logasundari, who had migrated to at Madurai city earlier to provide better education to her children, again moved back to Thenoor village after the elections. After assuming power, she started to perform her duties with much enthusiasm and concern for the community. She believed that serving people is like serving God. When she began performing as President of the Thenoor village, she faced lot of hurdles from the drunkards in the village and those who were opponent to her in the elections. Though she did not have in depth knowledge of Panchayat accounts and administration, she was able to grasp things quickly, since she served as Panchayat ward councilor earlier . She learned to face the challenges boldly, without allowing them to distract from her duty.

As a President she wished to do all works with perfection, but the Panchayat secretary remained as a biggest challenge for her, since he did not maintain proper accounts for the revenue collected. For example, though the house tax was collected from every house hold, the secretary failed to remit it in the panchayat account. After finding this malpractice, she severely warned him and introduced Demand Draft system for tax collection. Even after introducing this system the Panchayat secretary managed to do frauds, without writing proper accounts and swallowed people’s money. The matter was then taken seriously by Ms.Logasundari, who with the support of the Block Development Officer managed to suspend the Panchayat secretary on account of corruption.

After suspension of the Panchayat secretary, she herself was forced to maintain the account, in which she faced some difficulties due to lack of knowledge. During that time DHAN Foundation through its Panchayat development program, conducted a training for Panchayat president and also offered a course 'Diploma in Panchayat Management'. Ms.Logasundari, who was keen in learning and enhancing her knowledge about panchayat and panchayat administration, got enrolled in the training and also in the diploma course. This helped her a lot and now she could able to maintain panchayat accounts properly without the support of others. The Thenoor Panchayat is allowed to appoint to Panchayat secretaries, but Ms.Logasundari did not appoint anyone and take care of all the works, including maintaining the record of the village panchayat and also the accounts. The people due to introduction of demand draft system of tax collection also got aware of the banking practices and convinced that the amount is maintained in proper way. The house tax collected hitherto by the panchayat secretary was only ₹ 40,000. But after introduction of demand draft system, proper follow up with the villagers and proper accounting the tax revenue increased to ₹3,00,000, per year, which is indeed a great achievement. Enhancing the income of the village panchayat gave Ms.Logasundari much pleasure and pride.

In Tamilnadu, many of the panchayat presidents did not know about providing plan approval for construction of new house in the village. However Ms.Logasundari learned how to do plan approval and calculate fees for the same based on the size and type of construction of new house. She also introduced the system of providing license to petty shops, by which also she curtailed selling of cigarettes and tobacco products in the village.



Ms.Logasundari is a role model for other women presidents in the state. The women have the capacity to lead and also the ability to manage, provided a right opportunity is given. The president proudly says that she has ensured 100% house tax collection in the village. Also says that there will be no streets in the village without street lights. 'I personally have a look at the street lights regularly, and if I find any problem, I will take steps to replace them in a day' she adds. The drinking water supply to the village is also ensured throughout the year and there are no complaints of water scarcity. The quality of drinking water is also ensured by regular cleaning of the tanks .

Another important achievement by the president Ms.Logasundari was the availing of loan for construction of fifty houses in the panchayat through the Indhra Awas Yojana (IAY), of the Central Government and Green House scheme of the state government. One of the beneficiaries of the green house scheme proudly says that 'We have not given even a single paise to avail the funds for constructing house. We are proud of having a leader, who never receives bribes in any form'. All the beneficiaries of the housing scheme have pasted posters in the village, praising the president for not getting any bribe for the same.

Ms.Logasundari puts her heart and soul for betterment of the village and its people and works seven days a week. She spends her time not only in office but also in the field along with the people to understand their issues and needs. Ms.Logasundari says 'My villagers now eat rice three times a day, due to enhancement of their livelihood income. But I could not do so due to lack of time. Instead of rice, I take idli or dosa. My husband being educated in Vivekanandha college is also selfless and supporting me to work for people. I derived motivation from him and now perform well in my duties much to his astonishment'

Ms.Logasundari's efforts were lauded not only by the villagers in Thenoor, but also by the villagers in other panchayats. She also performs the role of Treasurer of Madurai West union Women President Network promoted by M-GRIP project of Panchayat Programme. The local tamil magazine Kanal Pookal offered her with 'Ullatchi Nayagi Award', to recognize her outstanding works for betterment of the village panchayat. The Tamilnadu Village cultural trust also has honored her with 'Gramiya Rathna Award' for her accomplishments as president of Thenoor village panchayat.

Bharathiya Mahila Bank and KDFS Collaboration: Stepping Stone for Bigger Impacts!

Janakiraman N*

Financing poor is not just about 'amount' given as finance. It provides a hope for them to live, ensures meeting of basic needs, supports livelihood stabilization and enables them to live with dignity. But formal finance is out of reach of poor at times of need, due to inadequate and improper delivery systems. Moreover, the practices of informal credit system are also exploitative or not adequate. Without ensuring access to affordable, adequate and timely credit services to poor, "financial inclusion" which is in the priority list of the nation will remain as a distant dream.

Kalanjiam Development Financial Services (KDFS) attempts to streamline credit to poor by providing relevant financial services to them, who are part of self-help institutions. KDFS, a Sec.25 Not – for Profit Company was promoted by SHGs and professionally managed to address the credit gap among vulnerable sections. Bridging the gap in development finance is its mission. The service of KDFS is not just financing but also it facilitates demonstration process to the MFI sector on better bank linkages. It enables the capacity of poor members in SHGs to plan and govern financial resources. It stitches the gap on time and much more in relation with poverty reduction through leveraging funds from various sources.

For the past twelve years, KDFS kept its promises well. During last quarter of 2013 – 14, another feather is added in the cap of KDFS with Bharathiya Mahila Bank (BMB) collaboration. Bharathiya Mahila Bank is first National bank with an exclusive focus on women empowerment and servicing to Women. It was established with a greater vision, "for the women, by the women and to the women" on 19th Nov 2013 by Union



government. In fact it could be the first and only women bank in the world. Presently they are focusing on initiating one bank branch in

a state. The bank consists of seven women directors in the board with Ms.Usha Ananthasubramaniam serving as CMD of the Bharathiya

Mahila Bank. Soon after its formal initiation, BMB was looking for collaboration with likeminded partners to reach out its financial services to women and DHAN Foundation was also approached for the same. In December 2013 a meeting was convened at Chennai in which Ms.Padmavathy, KDFS chairperson, Mr.Kalyanasundaram, one of the Board of Directors, KDFS and, Mr.Janakiraman, Chief Executive Officer of KDFS participated and discussed with the Ms.Usha Ananthasubramaniam,CMD, about the scope for collaboration. The activities of KDFS, method of service delivery and its reach was discussed in detail.

* Mr.Janakiraman.N, Chief Executive Officer, KDFS

Impressed by the community driven model of KDFS and the very thin margin retained by KDFS, the CMD assured the support to KDFS. A credit support portfolio for the SHGs in Maharashtra was also handed over to her during the meeting for facilitating linkage to those groups.

In continuation of this, field visits to federations under Madurai Urban was done on 18th and 19th January 2014, by the Deputy General Manager and Assistant General Manager (Priority sector) to understand KDFS systems, procedures and its relevance to credit support to groups. The systems and the model of four Kalanjiam institutions impressed them. The Chief Manager also went on a visit to Sholapur, Maharashtra to see our groups and federations to study the feasibility of the collaboration on 27th Feb, 2014. A loan of ₹ 26 crores got sanctioned to KDFS from the BMB on 1st March 2014 after all these processes.

Though KDFS has regular credit support from many nationalized banks, this collaboration is very unique.

This tie up was with the first women bank in the country. KDFS also was successful in getting ₹ 26 crores, which is the highest loan availed from any bank so far and a important milestone in the history of KDFS . The rate of interest at which the loan was offered initially was 12 percent which was reduced to 11.75 percent upon negotiation. DHAN incidentally is the first large scale collaborator for them and there is more scope for expanding this facility to other people institutions.

During March'14, we received ₹ .10 Crores from BMB and the same was distributed to 700 groups. In terms of group reach out and loan disbursement, March'14 stands highest achievement month in KDFS timeline. BMB linkage has tested our internal capacity to realize its potential and efficiency. KDFS has planned to utilize remaining 16 Crores before June'14 from BMB and also enhance its relationship with BMB not only with credit support but also on facilitating training and livelihood support to our members. We hope that our relationship with BMB will go long way with small and steady steps taken up during its first collaboration.

Event Update

Eye Camps by Tumkur Region

The federations promoted through Kalanjiam community Banking program in Tumkur Region, Karnataka has tied up with Shankara Eye Hospital, through a MoU to facilitate free eye camps to the members of SHGs and also others in the working area. The regional team met Mr.Suryanarayana, Chief Executive Officer of Shankara Eye hospital , which resulted in signing of this MoU. The first eye camp was held at Thovinakere. Before the commencement of the camp, awareness was created to the SHG members and the public by way of distributing leaflets about the camp, benefits they can avail and also through the SHG meetings.



A separate staff has been placed by the region to look after this activity who is also supported by a representative from Shankara eye hospital. The SHG members and public gave on overwhelming response to the eye camp. In one year(2013-14) six eye camps were held at different location in which 592 men, 535 women and 31 children participated of which 502 people got the cataract surgery done. The activity will be continued regularly in different villages which are covered by the federations in Tumkur region. This effort of the federation has been much appreciated by the SHG members who got benefited out of this service.

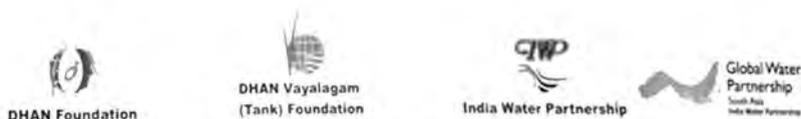
Workshop on Climate Change and Role of Water Managers

Venkatesan N*

Celebration of International World Water Day 2014

National Seminar on Water Management Challenges in Climate Risk Conditions - Role of Water Managers

on 22.03.2014 at DHAN Foundation, Madurai



DHAN Foundation, coordinator, South zone India Water Partnership organised a Round Table workshop on Climate Change and Role of Water Managers in the eve of celebrating World Water day on 22nd March 2014. The event was held at the premises of DHAN Foundation, Madurai with the support of India Water Partnership (IWP), a Pan-India Water Network. DHAN Foundation works with more than 2.5 lakhs farmers, who are small and marginal rainfed, tankfed farmers in six states across India. DHAN's work extend to more than 4000 village tanks and ponds in these states, which are rehabilitated and maintained by the community themselves. Water managers and Water User Association leaders from Tamilnadu, Andra Pradesh, Karnataka and Puducherry were invited for the event. More than 75 Water Managers and Association Leaders participated in the workshop.

Focus

- Experience sharing on the impact of Water Managers in irrigation during recent period.
- Importance of Water Managers in tank irrigation in Rainfed Tanks

- Sharing on Climate change and its implication, Adaptation by Water Managers from different contexts
- Discussion on needy alternative livelihood for water managers

Mr.N.Venkatesan, Programme Leader welcomed the Participants and explained the purpose and expected outcome of the workshop.





Mr.A.Gurunathan shared the importance of water managers and their role. He also shared the impact of climate change in rainfall pattern and the urge of water managers on effective water management techniques.

Shri M.P.Vasimalai, Executive Director of DHAN, emphasised the importance of water managers and he suggested different roles of water managers and also their importance in maintaining tank system in effective way. He suggested that Panchayat and Panchayat union to come forward in employing water managers for Panchayat tanks like in bigger tanks as the Public Works Department in Tamil Nadu employs Luskers in System Tanks. Alternative livelihood and permanent income for water managers to be ensured by Tank Associations.

Er.Rathinavel, Retd Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, Tamilnadu shared on the history of water managers roles and responsibilities and also his experience with water managers. He suggested that water user associations members can act as water managers on rotation basis wherever exclusive water managers are not available.

Water Managers shared their present status of their role and responsibility, and the effect of climate change on agriculture and their livelihood.



Four sub groups were formed to discuss on the following topics

1. Effect of Climate change in Tank irrigation and their livelihood
2. Ensuring Water Managers in all irrigation Tanks and the plan for 2014-15
3. Livelihood of water managers and Plan for 2014-15

Following declarations were made after deliberations of four sub groups

1. Employ water managers for all irrigation tanks and the remuneration for water managers to be ensured either by Water User Associations or the Panchayat.
2. Ensure all water Managers are part of Water User Associations and also in the SHGs/Micro Finance Groups for savings, credit and social security.
3. Part of revenue made from usufructs can be shared to Water Managers as they are the unofficial managers of usufructs also.
4. During non agricultural season, remuneration to Water managers to be ensured either through endowment interest or by other income sources majorly collecting taxes based on cropped area or the type of crop.
5. Water managers are maintaining tanks and they can be added as resource person for implementing MHNREGS in the particular tank works
6. Latest irrigation technologies and effective water management systems related trainings can be provided to the water managers
7. Like PWD tanks, lusker system can be followed in non system tanks also and Government can pay wages to Water managers





8. To cope up with climate change, water managers to be engaged compulsorily and water managers should work effectively to address the climate change cause especially in tank irrigation aspects

The resolutions were declared in the forum and adopted unanimously. Mr.S.P.Madhan Mohan shared vote of thanks.

Mainstreaming Neerkattis – Plan 2014-15

The following decisions were taken during the meeting.

- Implementing the resolutions taken up during the meeting, given in this report.
- Sharing a part of revenue made from endowment as remuneration to water managers
- Including all the water managers in MFG/SHG compulsorily.
- Maintaining water balance for each tank as water managers to be educated on water balance.
- Arranging additional MHNREGS Job card for Neerkattis'
- Conducting water managers meeting at block level
- Water Managers to be brought to lime light which will help to address their livelihood issues.



Development Quiz

1. What proportion of earth is covered by water?
a) 40 b) 50 c) 60 d) 70
2. Which of this is a water borne disease?
a) Amoebiosis b) Cholera
c) Hepatitis A d) All of the above
3. What percentage of water on earth is fresh water
a) 1 % b) 2.5 % c) 5 % d) 10 %
4. Water (Prevention and Control of pollution) act was passed in the year
a) 1970 b) 1972 c) 1974 d) 1976
5. What percentage of net sown area in our country is rainfed
a) 40 b) 50 c) 60 d) 70
6. Which is the longest river in India
a) Ganges b) Brahmaputra
c) Godavari d) Kaveri
7. How much of water is used by a person per day
a) 75 b) 100 c) 135 d) 180
8. What percentage of rural households doesn't have toilets according to the Census 2011
a) 53.1 b) 55.5 c) 69.3 d) 71.5
9. Which country is the largest user of ground water resources in the world ?
a) China b) India
c) USA e) None of the above
10. World water day is celebrated on
a) 20 March b) 22 March
c) 24 March d) 28 March

1. d 2. d 3. b 4. c 5. c
6. a 7. c 8. c 9. b 10. b

Answers:

International Women's Day Celebration- Panchayat Program

International Women's Day celebrations were organized by DHAN Panchayat programme under the Project Mainstreaming Gender Rights in Leadership at Panchayat Raj Institutions(M-GRIP). The events were organized in Madurai, Theni, Dindukal, and Nagaipattinam districts of Tamil Nadu and also in Karaikal, Pondicherry Union territory. Different type of events ensuring participation of women was held at twenty five places. A brief about the events organised during the first fortnight of March 2014 is given below.

Madurai District

In Usilampatti Block, around 300 school students(girls) participated in the awareness rally on Gender, organized. A discussion on the gender issues prevailing in the district was also facilitated.

In Alaganallur block, rally for awareness creation on gender issues and also elocution competition on the same was held at B.Mettupatti village. Nearly 200 girl students participated in the event.

In Rajakalpatti village of Alanganallur Block a awareness campaign on women issues was held. Youth in the village supported the campaign and met 600 families in Rajakalpatti and surrounding villages and distributed handbills.

In Veeraperumalpuram village of Kallikudi Block, a workshop was organized to create awareness on gender issues, in which more than 90 members participated. The highlight of the event is the opening of a common public toilet for women was done.

In Pappiahpuram village of Thirumangalam a workshop on gender issue was held with 92 persons.

Theni District

Women' day celebration was held in five villages in Theni district, Tamilnadu. In Srirangapuram Village drawing competition for school children highlighting the gender issue was held. Thirty students participated in it.



In Chellayeeapuram, Pallavarayanpatty Block of Theni District Rangoli competition was organised to bring out the skills of women for appreciation.

In Ramasamy Naickanpatti village in Utthamapalayam Block, "Workshop on women issues and recommended policy changes" was organised, in which around 150 persons participated. In Melachinthalaichery village of the same block elocution competition on "Issues based by women in society" was organized in which 18 contestants and 300 students participated.

In Manthisunai and Mookakadai village of Myladumparai Block of Theni "Awareness rally on total prohibition of alcohol" was conducted.

Dindigul District

In Dindukal district women's day celebration was held in six different places.

In Chekkapatti Village, Bathalagundu Block essay competition for school children on "Women Achievers" was held with twenty five students. In Kunnavarayanpattai village a public meeting was held to create awareness on issues faced by women in the society in which more than 180 persons participated.

In Sirankattupatti village of Natham Block 'Campaign for anemia control among adolescent women' was held in which eighty five students participated. Similar campaign was held in Thangachiyammanatti village of

Ottanchattiram Block in which more than 100 students participated,

A 'Campaign on Sanitation and Hygiene' was held at Viduthalaipatti Village, Vedachandur Block. More than ninety students participated in the campaign.

In Bilathur Village, Vadamadurai Block, awareness on existing laws for protection of women was created through a legal camp organized in which around one hundred members participated.

Puducherry

Women's day celebration was held in union territory of Pondicherry at Niravi village near Karaikal. The legal awareness camp held during the day was a great success with 142 person participating in the event. The Senior Advocate Mr. Veeraiyapillai gave a speech on legal rights of women and other laws in favor of women.

Rangoli competition was also held at Karaikal in which 50 women participated and exhibited their talents.

Nagapattinam

In Ottankadu village of Sembanarkoil, various competitions for women such as rangoli, sports and games were organised, in which around fifty women participated. 'Kuthuvilakku Pooja' was also conducted.

Cuddalore District

Women's day celebration was held at four places in Cuddalore district.

In Mathuranthagannallur village, Keeralalayam Block, awareness creation on women issues like gender equality, violence against women, workplace safety and women property right was held. More than 400 women participated in the event . Apart from this Awareness on Clean drinking water, sanitation and health was also done.

Sports event for women and awareness meeting on girl child education, nutritional security, gender equality and right age for marriage was organized in Pakkam Village. More than 150 women participated in the events.

Essay, Elocution, Rangoli and Recipe contest was organised as part of women's day celebration at Cuddalore in which more than 90 women participated. The focus of the essay and speech competition was on gender equity, educating girl children, women's health and laws in protection of women.

In Devanampattinam, Cuddalore recipe contest, games and rangoli were held for women, in which more than 300 women actively participated and exhibited their skills.



International Women's day Celebration- Kalanjiam Mutual Movement



‘In India on an average 31 percent of women go missing. About 44.5 percent of women gets married before proper age and 53 percent of women were subjected to domestic violence in one form or other. In families where the husband is an alcohol addict, the incidence of violence is more apart from the fact that the family income gets drained’ spoke Ms. Shanthi Maduresan, CEO, Kalanjiam Mutual Movement on the occasion of Women’s Day Celebration held at DHAN Foundation. “There is a direct relationship between alcoholism and domestic violence and women should join hands together to protect themselves against” such evil she added

The women’s day celebration was held by Kalanjiam Mutual Movement at the premises of DHAN Foundation on 8th March, 2014. The event had the participation of more than 300 Kalanjiam members and leaders. The focus of the event was “Prevention of discrimination and violence against women from Birth to Death” and to create a ‘Alcohol free society’. During the forenoon session Kalanjiam members shared the experience and benefits they gained through Micro credit and Micro justice, which was followed by a sub group discussion on the topic ‘From Birth to Death - Issues faced by women and means to overcome’.. Ms. Jayalakshmi, Journalist

in her special address highlighted the contemporary issues faced by women and said that women still have to go a long way to attain the status of equality. This was followed by another subgroup discussion on ‘Duties, responsibilities and rights of women in different life stages’ by the Kalanjiam members. The members came out with some resolutions for creating alcohol free families across the Kalanjiam federations, cooperating and facilitating the state and central government to enact policy’s to protect women and strengthen the existing policy’s, creating awareness on domestic violence and existing laws in force for protecting women etc., were passed during the meeting.

The afternoon session had the focus on creating an alcohol free society. The session was anchored by Mr., Rajapandian, CEO, Suham Trust who made a presentation about ‘ILL Effects of Alcohol’. An awareness song on the issue was sung by Ms. Meena, Vice President, Kalanjiam Mutual Movement followed by a drama on the theme again by Kalanjiam members. Mr. Ravichandran, Suvasam Deaddiction and Treatment center gave a special lecture on the treatment of alcohol addiction and how to handle the persons addicted to alcohol.



A short film 'Ammu' directed by Mr.Gideon Karthick depicting the exploitation of women and another short film on women empowerment produced by 'Ektha Foundation' was screened during the event.

The highlight of the event was the release of a booklet on "From birth to death - issues faced by women and means to overcome" by Mr.M.P.Vasimalai, Executive Director, DHAN Foundation. The book was received by the Smt. Chinnapillai and other Kalanjiam Leaders. The event had a colorful finish with a balloons released by the Kalanjiam women shouting slogans "Let's awake and Let's liberate". Ms.V.K.Padmavathi, CEO, Kalanjiam Foundation delivered the vote of thanks.

Women's day celebration by Regions

Women's day celebrations were also organized by Madurai rural, Madurai urban, Tanjore, Salem, Kachipuram and other regions under the Kalanjiam programme.

Madurai Urban Region

Women's day celebrations were held across eight locations under Madurai Urban and also organized at regional level. At locations, during the group meeting held during the month of March, 2014, discussions were held regarding protection of women against domestic violence and creating alcohol free society and resolutions were passed for the same. Leaflets to create awareness on domestic violence and creating an alcohol free society were distributed to Kalanjiam members and general public. At regional level, a meeting was organized at DHAN People Academy during which all field associates participated. The field associates were asked to share about the women achievers who impressed them most and reasons for the same. Apart from this, essay, elocution and drawing competition were held on the topic 'Women empowerment and growing leadership' and "Liberation of women" in which the field staffs participated actively.



Madurai Rural region

Women's day celebration was celebrated by Madurai rural region at Melur, Madurai in which 136 field associates from 12 locations participated. In the meeting issues faced by women like domestic violence, dowry harassment and the effect on alcoholism on families and society were discussed. Also the laws in force to protect women and how to avail legal protection through the micro justice centre's established in Kalanjiam locations were discussed. Various competitions were held for the field associates, which provided them an opportunity to exhibit their talents. Drawing, essay and musical chair competitions were held. The block integrators of the locations and the regional coordinator Ms. Rajalaxsmi were present during the event.

Tanjore Region

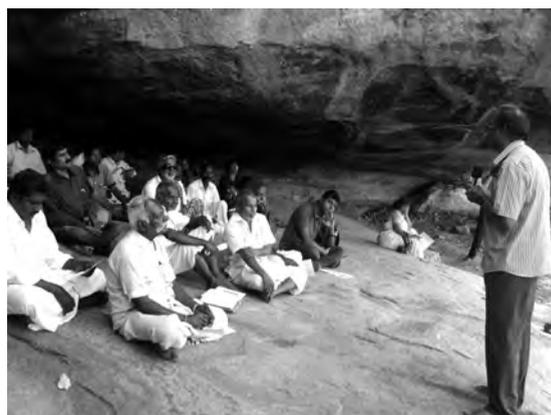
The International women's day celebration was held by Tanjore region on 8th March,2014 at Thangappa Udaiyanpatti village, Tanjore, in which the local villagers and Kalanjiam members participated in large numbers. The Kalanjiam women participated enthusiastically in musical chair, bucketing the ball and millet recipe competition held during the start of the event. After this the Kalanjiam members were asked to share about their growth and empowerment after joining Kalanjiam. The members shared about the livelihood enhancement, educational support and the opportunities provided by Kalanjiam to shape and empower them as good leaders. Later there was a discussion on domestic violence and the menace created due to alcoholism in families. The members expressed concern over the fact that large number of youth get addicted to alcohol even at a tender age and leakage of family income because of this habit. Resolutions were passed by women to protect themselves against domestic violence and for creating a alcohol free society.

Heritage Walk- Vazhudhur

DHAN Foundation's Toursim Program arranged for a Heritage walk in Vazhudhur on February 16, 2014, a village situated in the banks of river Thamirabarani, in Ambasamudhiram Block, Thirunelveli District.

The traditional name of Vazudhur was actually Vazhidhiyur, being named after the Pandiya King Vazhudhi. The eight hundred year old Siva temple, built during Pandiya period stands as a testimony for the heritage value of the village. The temple has a garpagraha (karuvarai), Artha Mandapam and Mahamandapam, apart from a shrine for the woman goddess (amman sannithi). Stone inscriptions found in the temple of First Sadayavarman Kulasekarapandian (1190 - 1216), First Maaravarman Sunderapandian (1214 - 1238) and Maaravarman Vikramapandian, the Pandiya Kings, mentions about the various gifts given to the temple by those kings. The stone inscription by Kulasekarapandian and others states the name of the temple as 'Thiru vakneeswaramudaiyaar Temple'. The Kulasekarapandian inscriptions states the donation made by Selvagnanadevan for lighting a daytime lamp in the temple. The stone inscription by Sundarapandian mentions about Vijayapanman, who also made donations for lighting lamps in the temple. Another stone inscription speaks of land donated to the temple, with tax exemption for the same. The presence of two village tanks- Sankaran tank and Umaingai tanks, the belonged to the temple also was mentioned in these inscriptions. The village Vazudhiyar remained as a North eastern part of Rajaraja Sadhurvedhi Mangalam once upon a time. The temple stands as a symbol of architectural excellence and the rich heritage value of Indian villages.

Heritage walk was also organized on the same day at Karungalakudi Village in Madurai District, which is situated enroute to Trichy. Mr.K.P.Bharathi, Programme Leader, Toursim for Development, Dr.Vedhachalam, Archeologist and large number of people participated in the walk to understand the historical significance of the village and its temple, and to carry the message of the need for preservation of such heritage sites. The village has a great significance, wherein Jains lived during ancient days, which is evident by the presence of Jain caves and stone inscriptions found in the site. A two thousand five hundred year old stone inscription written in ancient 'tamil brahmi' language, mentions about Jain caves, constructed by a person known by the name Arithan, of Izaiyur village.



To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then, indeed, is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater powers of endurance, has she not greater courage? Without her, man could not be. If nonviolence is the law of our being, the future is with woman. Who can make a more effective appeal to the heart than woman?

- Mahatma Gandhi





Vivasya Thiruviza- 2013

The Rainfed program of DHAN Foundation, DHAN Vayalagam Tankfed agricultural program and Kalanjium Thozhilagam Limited, participated in the Vivasaya Thiruviza-2013 organized by CII in partnership with Government of Tamilnadu (ATMA scheme) and TNAU and exhibited their stalls. It had a overwhelming response from the farmers. The sale of small millets with recipe DVD was also done. The display of simple agricultural tools used by rainfed farmers of Anjetti like seed drill, pallukai etc., attracted many farmers who started making enquires on their usage and availability. More than 8000 farmers from Madurai, Theni and Dindugul district participated in the event and got benefited.



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