



Madurai Symposium 2011

Advancing Development

towards Sustainable Livelihoods

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Bulletin

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Knowledge Brief

The Madurai Symposium is designed to be a platform through which different development stakeholders including community institutions, non-government organizations, civil societies, the Government, financial institutions, and academia convene to share their knowledge and experiences with the purpose of advancing development practice. The following brief highlights some of the key lessons learned during the first two days across different development areas.

Water and Livelihoods

Tank-based livelihoods: Tank-based livelihoods include farming, animal husbandry, pisciculture, pottery, brick making, fuel wood cutting, and charcoal making. Some of the issues in the tank based livelihood management are the declining stake of the people resulting from the shift in tank management and control from the local community to the State. The breakdown of the traditional system of maintenance of tanks by the community has led to encroachment of tanks and waterways, insufficient storage due to siltation, and breach of bunds. Also, in the name of infrastructure development, many tanks have been converted as bus stands, government buildings, and roads.

In Tamil Nadu, 45 percent of its food production comes from tank-fed agriculture. The declining trend in tank-fed agriculture warrants for an exclusive focus to enhance the tank based livelihoods, which necessitates an exclusive "Tank-Based Livelihood Mission" which can be instrumental in promoting and strengthening tank based livelihoods through field based activities, research, and training and capacity building activities. This will also help in bringing policies related to encroachment eviction, tank silt based application, and creating an annual maintenance fund that can strengthen tank-based livelihoods.

Umbrella Programme for Natural Resource Management: The Umbrella Programme for Natural Resource Management (UPNRM) has a direct relevance in promoting sustainable livelihoods. The UPNRM has demonstrated that the NRM activities are bankable. Hitherto, UPNRM activities were based only on grants now it has switched over to loan component. In the initial

Events

- ✘ UPNRM and Livelihoods
- ✘ Conservation of Water Bodies for Sustainable Livelihoods
- ✘ Securing Water in Tank Cascades for Agricultural Livelihoods in Gundar Basin, Tamil Nadu
- ✘ Knowledge Building Workshop on Case Studies on Water and Wastewater
- ✘ National Workshop on Safeguarding Livelihoods of Poor through Health Insurance Under Universal Health Insurance Scheme
- ✘ Seminar on Showcasing Best Practices on Converging Microfinance and Tribal Livelihoods
- ✘ National Convention on Skill Building for Sustainable Livelihoods of Self-Help Group Federations
- ✘ National Conference on IGNOU Community College Initiatives for Sustainable Livelihoods
- ✘ Microplanning in Local Self-Government Institutions for Livelihoods Development

stages there was lot of reluctance for this switchover but now the farmers are convinced to take loans for NRM activities. Through UPNRM many farmers have created or upgraded assets. Land which was fallow for many years is now brought under cultivation, and the land already under cultivation has improved, thereby increasing income of the farmers. It is interesting that farmers are willing to take loan for the development of common assets in their villages. Some of the potential areas identified for evolving new loan products include drip irrigation systems, farm ponds, and integrated farming systems. The soil conservation aspects should be given priority by encouraging vermi composting and other traditional farming practices.

Tank development at sub-basin level: A comprehensive tank based watershed development programme which includes land development, farm pond creation, and tank development can enhance the agriculture based livelihoods. It is important to prevent

dumping of garbage and sewage in water resources. More focus should be given on rainfed agriculture. Wide extension of technologies like soil treatment, micro irrigation techniques, system of rice intensification, and precision farming techniques to the farmers is required. Either a tank cascade or a watershed should be considered as a micro unit for development planning and implementation. Developing special products for the landless people needs attention. Application of GIS remote sensing for effective planning and implementation can help in livelihood enhancement.

Water and wastewater: Scaling-up of wastewater treatment technology at the community level should be affordable, simple to handle (technology), and owned by the community. The impact of this technology on livelihoods is very significant as it reduces the adverse effect of pollutions such as water, land and air due to the surface flow of wastewater in the rural and urban areas. It prevents the income loss due to reduced working days caused by water-borne diseases. The great challenge is that though there is an enabling environment, the government system does not enforce the rules and regulations on wastewater treatment among the public. There is a need for creating awareness among the people through media and demonstrations. The way forward is to promote total sanitation programme through collective work by involving the development players to protect the people from health hazards thereby improve the livelihoods of the people.

Climate change adaptation for sustainable agriculture: It is the climate fluctuation, not the climate change, which has been taking place for more than a decade. However, if this fluctuation is not addressed appropriately, climate change may happen. It has been indicated by the uneven distribution of rainfall by season and overall declining trend of minimum temperature across the seasons. An innovative and integrated livelihood practice is being experimented by the agronomy department of Annamalai University which includes the cultivation of paddy, culturing of fish in paddy field and rearing of poultry over the fish trench.

Coastal water resources: Surface water bodies such as tanks, village ponds, and farm ponds are being used for irrigation and domestic purposes. The promotion of community ownership, democratic practices, mainstream linkages, and women participation in conservation programmes contribute significantly in sustaining the agriculture and enhancing the well being of the farming families. The irrigation tank renovation has resulted in increase of cropping area, successful cropping, increased income, reduced migration, improved ground water quality, and effective utilisation of tank as a total livelihood system. The village pond renovation resulted in increased duration of water availability, reduced the drudgery of women, and enhanced ground water recharge. Farm

ponds have emerged as a livelihood strategy of farmers and adaptation for climate change. The experience in Tamil Nadu shows that there is an increase in yield, maximised land use, increased employment, and prevention of sea water intrusion.

Microfinance and Livelihoods

Tribal livelihoods: Microfinance models in tribal areas need adaptation to suit the needs of the people. Remoteness, low literacy rates, and lack of infrastructure facilities restricts the development process in the tribal areas. The rich natural resources available (land, water, mineral resources, tourism potential) should be best utilized for the welfare of tribals and regulations should favour tribes over the private or corporate players. The native tribal culture and practices should be considered while evolving a model for tribal development. Cooperative and collective effort of different developmental players working in a particular tribal context is very crucial - the government, NGOs, bankers and other private players should come together for the welfare of the tribes. Working together will serve to achieve the goal more effectively in a shorter span of time.

Safeguarding livelihoods through health insurance: The Government of India implements Universal Health Insurance Scheme (UHS) through four public sector companies. Only five percent of the poor are covered under health insurance in India out of 37 crores BPL families. The public health expenditure is only 15 percent which shows that there is marginal outreach through health insurance. The statistics show the gaps in realising the claim benefits by the poor due to complexity of claim procedures and inadequate claim amount. The claim ratio among the poor is about 47 percent, though it covers treatment charges, wage loss compensation and accident coverage. But it is 100 percent among middle and rich class which reveals that the poor could not realise their actual claim benefits. It warrants the insurance companies to improve the product features, increase claim amount and simplify claim procedures.

People living with HIV and livelihoods: Finding the people affected by HIV/AIDS is a very sensitive task, which demands a systematic and confidential process. Once the affected people are identified, the societal discriminations and their implications on their livelihoods and status of living need to be studied.

Though it is difficult, there is a need for organising them into special self-help groups and their networks to create an enabling environment for expressing their problems. The networks at various levels would facilitate the special SHGs to set mechanisms and processes to access the basic services such as finance, health, education and other civic facilities to lead a decent life. The special SHGs should have regular savings and credit activities to facilitate the

members of SHGs to access credit for various needs. The people affected by HIV/AIDS need insurance cover to undertake regular health treatment, sustainable income to lead a decent life through employment opportunities and income generation activities for which the microfinance services are essential.

Micro-planning by Panchayats: While the Central and State governments have planning commissions to draw their development plans, the third tier of our federal government, Panchayats, does not have such mechanisms. Despite the constitutional provisions, most of the State governments are reluctant to empower the Panchayats to plan for themselves. Exceptionally, Kerala has pioneered in participatory micro-planning process at the Panchayat level. The micro-plans by the Panchayats have brought a significant change in financial allocations by the State to create livelihood support infrastructure.

Only people-led planning can ensure ownership in execution of the plan, monitoring its outcomes, and leveraging more resources for achieving the plans. The micro-plan encompassing interventions such as livelihood finance, skill-building, value-chain development, and forward and backward linkages have direct impact on livelihoods. Infrastructure development, health, and educational initiatives have indirect impact on it. The *Working with Panchayats* programme of DHAN has evolved a tool-kit for micro-planning with a livelihood focus, which has been accepted as a critical component by UNDP in its endogenous tourism project.

WATER AND LIVELIHOODS

UPNRM and Livelihoods

"Natural resources should be managed fully", said the Chief Guest, Mr S Natarajan, DGM, NABARD. He acknowledged the successes that have been made by DHAN Foundation in implementing the Umbrella Programme on Natural Resources Management (UPNRM), but also identified further areas for focus. These included drip irrigation, eco-friendly products, integrated farming and bio-gas plants.

These remarks were made as part of the opening statements on a convention on UPNRM and Livelihoods,



organised by the Kalanjiam Development Financial Services (KDFS), Madurai. About 200 members of DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation and Rainfed Development Programme attended the event. The purpose of the event was to evolve new activities and identify loan needs for common activities such as community well deepening and oorani related work.

Mr Vijay Kalavakonda shared that current agricultural practices deteriorate the soil's fertility; UPNRM can take advantage of traditional farming practices to restore fertility.

All participants agreed that water conservation is crucial in today's environment. Furthermore, they suggested that eco friendly activities could be identified and integrated with the UPNRM project. The products identified under UPNRM must not degrade or over-exploit existing resources. Value addition on agriculture commodities based on the context specific needs could be taken up under UPNRM through people institutions at different levels.

Some of the activities suggested for being developed under UPNRM include poultrying as allied activity, rearing goats and milch animals as agriculture based activities, preparing coconut coir, deepening wells, fencing for individual lands, planting trees in the wastelands, and promoting greenhouses.

Conservation of Water Bodies for Sustainable Livelihoods

The purpose of this workshop is to: disseminate the insights gained from increased water harvesting and decreased desertification (IWHDD) on conservation of water bodies for sustainable livelihoods; share best practices and lessons learnt; consolidate the recent experiences of various stakeholders; and identify good practices, models, and techniques related to water bodies. It is appreciable that DHAN Foundation has taken efforts to renovate water bodies that have not been maintained for years, said Dr Krishnasamy, TNAU, Prog. Chief Scientist. Massive efforts however, need to be taken to rehabilitate and renovate all the tanks so as to bring their original capacities. Encroachers have to be evicted, and channels need to be revived; doing so will enhance agriculture and will serve the water needs of humans and livestock during times of drought.

Mr Subburaj, Team Leader, DHAN Foundation, described the ways in which DHAN Foundation has been working on strengthening livelihoods through conservation of water bodies. Mr Singarayar, Programme Leader, DHAN Foundation explained DHAN's approach of conservation through community organisations. He highlighted the successful implementation of IWHDD and detailed the role of community organisation in implementing the work.

Conservation of water bodies implemented through community organisations not only ensures sustainable livelihoods but also brings democracy and transparency to the whole process. Mr P Rajan, Team Leader, DHAN Foundation, described how tanks can be seen as a system of livelihoods, sharing how the renovation of tanks had led to increased irrigation in 6,800 acres, thereby strengthening the livelihoods of the community and improving their living conditions.

DHAN Foundation's experience of using village ponds to fulfil the domestic needs of villagers was described by Mr Sathish Kumar; through the renovation of village ponds, the availability of potable water was extended by three to four months, thus ensuring water availability throughout the year. Similar experiences with farm pond promotion were shared by Mr Adhinarayanan, DHAN Foundation.

The panellists and participants suggested that the total irrigated area before and after water bodies conservation has to be conducted. Livelihoods could be upgraded through the introduction of different technologies, for instance mechanised sowing, portable mini-sprinklers, and the introduction of horticulture crops. They also suggested that external support should be provided to small NGOs for ensuring conservation works.

Securing Water in Tank Cascades for Agricultural Livelihoods in Gundar Basin, Tamil Nadu

Chief Guest, Er RK Sivanappan, Water Resource Consultant, suggested that the water and agriculture department of the State Government should focus on developing watershed projects in a comprehensive manner. The catchment area of Gundar basin-a non-perennial area-is good, but because of the improperly functioning water storage bodies, infrastructure development work needs to be done. The existing tanks and ooranies need to be improved through intensive planning and implementation by all stakeholders including respective government departments, agricultural departments, and banks. This event should help generate and disseminate ideas for water resources restoration and agricultural development in the Gundar basin area.

"The second revolution in agriculture," said Dr Chelliah, Professor and Head, RRS, Aruppukottai, "is in improving the productivity of rainfed agriculture." The upper Gundar sub-basin area is a predominantly rainfed area, but the basins in those areas are deteriorated due to poor maintenance, encroachment, and use of tank silt for non-agriculture based activities such as brick-making. To improve the situation in the basin, he suggested building the social capital of the people living there and improving dryland agriculture in the region.

Dr M Krishnaveni, Centre for Water Resources, Anna University, Chennai, described the spatial technologies

available for solving hydrological challenges in a tank cascade system. These include technologies which help to map out drainage courses, analyse water budgeting through estimating tank catchment yield and mapping the command area of the cascade system. He added that GIS tools can be extremely beneficial in the water budgeting and watershed development of an area, and that wastewater recycling also needs to be promoted.

Mr R Sivasamy, RS & GIS Department, TNAU, Coimbatore, elaborated on the ways in which GIS and remote sensing technologies can be applied for basin development. He reiterated many of the benefits described by Dr Krishnaveni, adding the application of these tools in the area of flood disaster management. He stressed that watershed management needs to be an integrated or holistic approach if agriculture is to be significantly impacted.

Er. P Selvan, Agriculture Engineering Department, Madurai, presented on the ground water potential of upper Gundar basin, Madurai district, Tamil Nadu. He shared that exploitation and unabated pollution of this vital resource is threatening the ecosystem. He stated that to protect aquifers from over exploitation, we need an effective groundwater management policy. Promoting community action in the rehabilitation of tanks for recharging groundwater would go a long way in augmenting the groundwater supply.

Participants and panellists reflected that tanks are the lifeline of livelihoods of poor farmers. Tank development works in sub-basins by the government, NGOs, and people institutions have augmented the water storage, leading to increases in cropping, livestock development, and drinking water availability. All of these help to stabilize livelihoods of the people in the basin. Other agricultural technologies, for instance system of rice intensification and precision farming, are other ways to effectively manage scarce water resources while also developing livelihoods.

Knowledge Building Workshop on Case Studies on Water and Wastewater

The purpose of this workshop was to share experiences on wastewater treatment and raise the public's awareness on water and wastewater management. During the workshop, several case studies were shared linking water management with the development of livelihoods. About 25 delegates representing: Aravind Eye Hospital, Madurai; SACS-MAVMM Engineering College, Madurai; Enviro Care India; DRDA, Madurai; Green Foundation; DHAN Karunai Illam; Exnor; CDD Society, Bangalore; and Madurai Corporation participated in the workshop.

Chief Guest, Mr Samuel, Project Director, DRDA, Madurai, shared that workshops like these are very useful for the community stating that "Even though the Government has initiated many development services,

partnerships with NGOs are the best way to help proper service delivery."

Dr S Rajamohan, ME, Enviro Care India Ltd., attended to make the audience aware of safe drinking water, drinking water standards, and various methods of water treatment. By drinking safe and pure water, our efficiency is enhanced: the chances of falling ill will be reduced, and thereby, our livelihoods will not be affected. Speaking of the types of public awareness that are required, Dr Rajmohan, said that the public needs to adopt the "R-3 Techniques": reduce, recycle, and recover.

Mrs Sasikala, Thenmadurai Vattara Kalanjiam, shared their Kalanjiam's experience on community toilet management in Thideer Nagar, Madurai. They have constructed a toilet with 18 seats and 4 bathing rooms. The toilet is maintained by the community. A total of 530 users in the slum are using these toilets. From these toilets, the Kalanjiam cluster has earned an amount of Rs 80,000 during the last one year. This venture provided a linkage between Madurai Corporation and the Kalanjiam.

Mr Andrews Jacob, CDD, Bangalore (Consortium for DEWATS Dissemination-Bremen Overseas Research and Development Agency) shared the eight years performance of DEWATS system in Friends of Camphil, Bangalore, a trust run for the mentally challenged people. Through the implementation of a bio-gas module, an amount of Rs 1,20,000 was saved in the last eight years. Every year, water samples are taken at inflow and outflow points and are analysed, and they have always met treated water quality standards.

Mrs R Devika presented her experience in the low use of DEWATS systems in Panaiyur College which paved a way for collaboration with the local governing body. Mr Venkatasamy, Programme Officer, DHAN Foundation, shared that "we are doing good and bad things. It is good that we are treating water and making more potable water available, but our current levels of effort are insufficient to meet the water needs in the near future."

It was discussed that DEWATS is an economically viable and affordable system of wastewater treatment, even for the poor.

MICROFINANCE AND LIVELIHOODS

National Workshop on Safeguarding Livelihoods of Poor through Health Insurance Under Universal Health Insurance Scheme

The Government is responsible for the health of all its constituents, but Government public health expenditure is less than one percent. This is a problem because in India, 37 crores of people live below the poverty line



and are thus unable to meet health expenditures out of pocket; poor health, in turn, also affects livelihoods. As a social security initiative, the Universal Health Insurance Scheme was introduced in 2003 to provide health insurance for the poor.

This workshop identified several issues and challenges in accessing the Universal Health Insurance Scheme (UHS) by the poor and ascertained the gaps in the product features. UHS protects the livelihoods of the poor by providing wage loss compensation and prevents huge health expenditures. Even though UHS covers wage loss compensation along with existing illnesses and personal accidental claim of the health of the family, its overall claim ratio at the national level in all public sector companies is only 47% for the last seven years which is very low when compared with the similar hospitalization medical claim ratio that includes coverage of middle class and rich people. The chief guest, while raising this concern on the product, added that "the workshop should spell out the ways and means of making this product more effective by suggesting appropriate pro-poor systems and pro-poor features in the product."

Mr S Akilan, National Insurance Company, shared that "there is no social security network for the poor" and that it seems as if people do not care about the rural poor. Schemes like UHS are trying to address this problem. He then described the provisions of the Government of India to access health insurance, and explained the different features of UHS.

Ms Gayathri, DHAN Foundation, presented the national experience of UHS by four public sector companies: National Insurance, United India Insurance, Oriental Insurance, and New India Insurance. Despite their efforts, these four companies have only been able to provide insurance coverage to 1 crore people over 7 years, leaving 36 crores of BPL in India left uninsured.

Mr Kesavaraman presented the community perspective, stressing unrealistic product limits, delays in claim settlements, lack of interest of network hospital for cashless service, and family composition restrictions. These points were reinforced by Ms Palaneeswari, who also

described the experience of SUHAM hospital. Mr Sathish, Good Health Plan Ltd, explained the procedure for receiving claims and the types of illnesses covered.

Mrs Nihara, Gangai Federation, shared her experience: after she had met with an accident, even though she had submitted all bills, she was asked to submit a legal medical certificate which she could not provide; her claim was rejected.

Federation leaders responded with their experience about procedures and delayed claim settlement and the limitations of insurance product features. All stakeholders suggested simplifying the administration procedures and product features.

Seminar on Showcasing Best Practices on Converging Microfinance and Tribal Livelihoods

Despite the implementation of various development plans and programmes in general and exclusive development schemes for scheduled fifth and sixth areas, tribal communities in India continue to be socio-economically backward. Based on this, the present workshop, which has been organized by the DHAN Kalanjiam Foundation, attempted to showcase the best practices on integrating microfinance and tribal livelihoods and impart knowledge on the development of tribal livelihood strategies by analyzing their risks and vulnerability, and identifying the financial, human, physical, natural and social capital available to them.

The seminar was attended by about 45 delegates representing from the Centre for Collective Development (CCD) - Adilabad, MAVIM-Maharashtra, ITWWS-Irula, Tribal Women Welfare Society-Chengalpet, and Vazhndhu Kattuvom Poject from Yercaud, Kollimalai, Kalvarayan and Jawadhu Hills. The resource persons of the event include: Mr Shesha Rao, CCD, Adilabad; Mr Vittal Rao, Programme Leader, DHAN Foundation; and Mr Madhan Kumar, Programme Leader, DHAN Foundation.



Mr Shesha Rao shared the cooperative model for tribal development, highlighting a success case of establishing a dal mill that was established with an investment of Rs 58 lakh and is currently running a profit of Rs 14.5 lakh per year.

"The development focus on the tribal sector in India is unbalanced" said Mr S Ramesh, DHAN Foundation. He also described some of the characteristics of tribal livelihoods and shared some of the efforts that could be taken by the Government and NGOs.

"Tribes have been evacuated from native hills due to various forest acts," said Ms Rajendiran, Irula Tribal Women Welfare Society. Now, these tribes have organized themselves to collect medicinal plants and manufacture medicines.

Mr Vittal Rao shared the DHAN Kalanjiam Foundation's initiatives of ensuring tribal livelihoods. He reflected on the collective marketing system of soyabean and fertilizer by tribal women SHG federations. He also shared the social and water conservation efforts and reclamation of 10,000 hectare of land with NABARD's support in a tribal context.

Mr Muralidharan, Dharan Educational Trust shared about initiatives in Kalvarayan Hill to promote honey bee cultivation as an alternative livelihood of tribal people, especially the differentially abled and vulnerable people. The 35-day long training consists of 15 days of classroom work and 20 days of practical sessions. About 300 people have been trained; at the end of the training, participants were provided with two bee hives each.

National Convention on Skill Building for Sustainable Livelihoods of Self-Help Group Federations

The programme started with a prayer by participants from all states. Ms Shanthi Maduresan, CEO of INFOS, welcomed the guests and the participants. She shared that this convention has been jointly organised by INFOS and NABARD with a focus on sharing the prospects and challenges of achieving sustainable livelihoods through skill building. Mr Natarajan, Deputy General Manager, NABARD, acknowledged the vast skills that are available among SHG members; however, he pointed out that many of these skills remain dormant because the members are not provided with enough opportunities. He suggested that skill-building and training should be given for existing activities rather than for activities in which the members have no experience. Finance, capacity-building, and market support are three elements that facilitate sustainable livelihoods for SHG members.

Mr Sankar Narayanan, Assistant General Manager, NABARD, remarked that correctly identifying areas for skill-building, designing proper capacity-building and market support systems, and quality control and



management were three challenges for livelihoods skill building.

Ms G Pankajam, Former Vice Chancellor, Gandhigram Rural University, described the convention as equal to a National Integration Camp reflecting the heritage of India as the participants came from different states. She mentioned that self-confidence is the key for sustainable livelihoods, and that the dairy movement has been phenomenal as a sustainable livelihood opportunity. SHG members are not alone: they are a part of a big movement, and for success in livelihoods development, their activities need to start at a micro level and then develop to the macro level.

Then the forum broke into regional-based subgroups and deliberated on the lead paper presented by Ms Shanthi Maduresan. Discussions included classification of members based on poverty levels and family types. The group also deliberated that loan products for livelihoods need to be designed only on the above categorisation basis. It was felt that a member baseline should be conducted on occupations to identify the skill needs of the member families. For this, different participatory methods and the importance of creating an inception report for a village were shared. The participants also had lengthy discussions on the prospects and challenges involved in skill building. The convention was concluded with the valedictory address by Ms Akhila Devi.

National Conference on IGNOU Community College Initiatives for Sustainable Livelihoods

The purpose of this national conference was to sensitize and spread the concept of IGNOU's community college scheme, to facilitate cross learning through experience sharing by community colleges, to sensitize and enable SHG federations and NGOs to take up skill building through IGNOU's community college scheme, and to motivate youth and poor people to make use of community colleges for their development.

About 270 members from 18 community colleges (CCs) of Tamil Nadu attended the conference. The resource

persons of the conference include: Dr Victor, former Director, Collegiate Education, Tamil Nadu; Dr C K Ghosh, Nodal Officer, CC Unit, IGNOU, New Delhi; Dr Shanmugam, Regional Director, IGNOU, Madurai; and Dr Pankajam, Former Vice-Chancellor, Gandhigram University.

Dr Victor, Former Director, Collegiate Education, Government of Tamil Nadu shared that this forum enables community colleges to create links with SHG federations and vice versa. Working together in this way will help to build sustainable livelihoods.

The IGNOU community college initiative helps with advancing sustainable livelihoods, said Dr C K Ghosh, Nodal Officer, Community College Unit, IGNOU, New Delhi. This forum is an opportunity to strengthen the progress of these community colleges have been making towards sustainable livelihoods and can also help to institutionalize the community college scheme; both of these are urgently needed. He stated that these colleges are for the community and by the community, and that they help to fill the gaps in the existing education system. To date, 1.5 lakhs students have enrolled in the IGNOU scheme; about 70 percent of them have appeared for examination and 60 percent have got employment opportunities.

Mrs Shanthi, DHAN Foundation, stated that skill-building is required to bring sustainability to livelihoods. She described DHAN's experience with its Livelihood Initiative with Functional Education (LIFE) programme and with community colleges oriented towards livelihood creation.



Microplanning in Local Self-Government Institutions for Livelihoods Development

Planning has been one of the important development management functions of the governments since independence. The exclusive institution for planning is in operation at both the Union and State Government level. On the contrary, the local self governments mandated to serve the local community are not practicing the planning process in its spirit. According to Article 243

(G) of the Indian Constitution, all local government institutions especially the village panchayats have to plan for their economic development and social justice. But, in fact, it has not been ensured in most of the states.

With this background, the workshop on Micro-Planning at Local-Self Government Institutions for Livelihood Development attempted to deliberate on the different dimensions of micro-planning with a special focus on livelihood development. The event was organised by the Working with Panchayats programme of DHAN Foundation. About 35 delegates representing from ABT Community College, Gandhigram University, Green Foundation, Pudhu Vazhvu Project, DHAN Foundation, Hope Trust, Agriculture College, Madurai, and Meenakshi Mission Hospital participated in the workshop.

The resource persons of the workshop include: Mr Vallinayakam K, Additional Director (Rtd.), Rural Development Department, Government of Tamil Nadu; Mr Subramaniam, Additional Director (Rtd.), Rural Development Department, Government of Tamil Nadu; and Mr Jenarthan, Dist. Project Manager, Pudhu Vazhvu, Theni.

Mr. Vallinayakam, in his address, portrayed the reasons for success of Kerala micro-planning model. An important reason among them is that the micro-planning process was driven by people and it became a people campaign. About 600 key resource persons at state level, 1400 at the district level, and 100,000 at the village

panchayat level volunteered to carry forward the micro-planning process. The community had the strength of planning and the government facilitated it. It reveals that the other states can also empower their respective local-self government (LSG), provided that the similar kind of rigour among people and the political will among the politicians are created.

He also remarked that the community level planning is the key factor in the success of the Pudhu Vazhvu project in Tamil Nadu. The rationale behind the success of micro-planning is the mutuality between people and the government; people plan at the grassroots level and the government facilitates it.

Mr I Balu, Project Executive of DHAN Foundation, mentioned from the DHAN Foundation's experience that micro-planning has been instrumental in enhancing the livelihood conditions people at the village level. He also pointed out that people institutions' plan and households' plan need to be integrated for holistic micro-planning.

Mr N Janakiraman, Sr Project Executive, DHAN Foundation, presented the livelihood based micro-planning processes and its benefits as part of post-tsunami sustainable livelihood project, Government of Tamil Nadu.

Mr S Singarayar, Programme Leader of DHAN Foundation facilitated the discussion.

