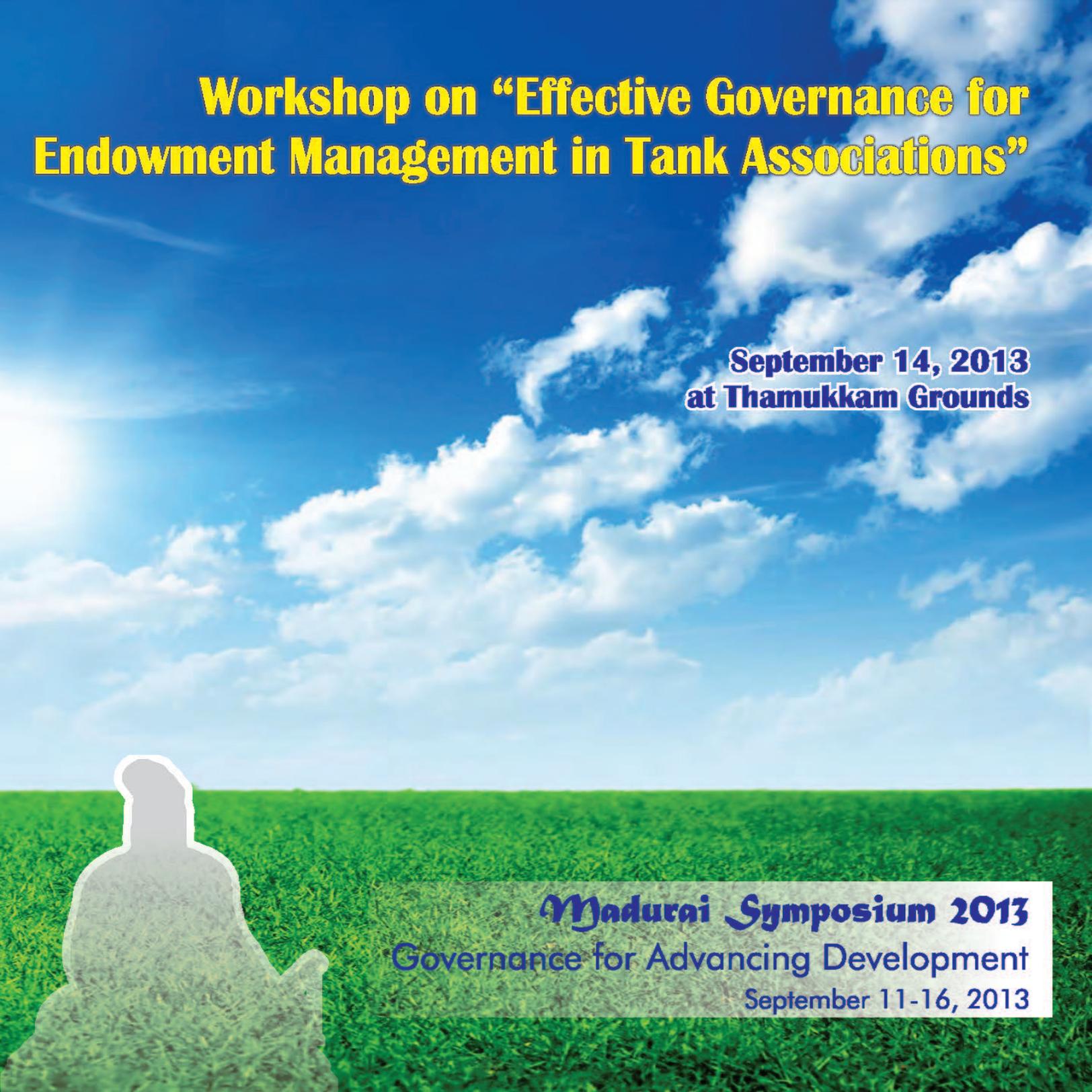


Workshop on “Effective Governance for Endowment Management in Tank Associations”

**September 14, 2013
at Thamukkam Grounds**



Madurai Symposium 2013
Governance for Advancing Development
September 11-16, 2013

Madurai Symposium

The Madurai Symposium is a biennial event organised by DHAN Foundation since 2003 to facilitate sharing of knowledge and experiences on development themes and interventions among various stakeholders of development – NGOs, government institutions, civil societies, financial institutions, academicians and researchers. This year, the sixth Madurai Symposium is scheduled from 11-15 September 2013 at Thamukkam grounds, Madurai. As part of the Symposium, several workshops, seminars and people conventions will be organized on the theme of Governance for Advancing Development. The DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation is organising a workshop “Effective Governance for Endowment Management in Tank Associations” on 14th September 2013 as part of the Symposium.

Background

Endowment for a common cause is not a new concept for India. Sharing ones wealth for the needy was our heritage. The Thirukkural written 2000 years ago says the importance of giving. One of the couplets says “All the wealth acquired with perseverance by the worthy is for the exercise of benevolence (Kural 212)”. The inscriptions dating back to 1190 AD in Somangalam village of Kanchipuram district document that traditionally endowment funds were created to renovate irrigation tanks. Similarly, there are several inscriptions stand testimony to the practice of land and livestock donation to temples to meet its routine expenses. The local rulers and farming communities, in those days, realised the importance of creating endowment fund for water conservation and building sustainable livelihoods. Contributing for tank renovation itself is an effort to create endowment as the tanks generate income for future maintenance through usufructs.

In the modern age, this concept of endowment has vanished due to breakdown in community management. The local water bodies, which were closely fabricated with the local culture and practices, have met with a continuous mismanagement. In many places the tanks were alienated, abandoned, and encroached. These water bodies have been supporting the human kind to combat climate change, address water shortages in southern peninsular India. Considering the situation and based on the learning from the community, DHAN Foundation reintroduced the endowment fund concept in 2000 to facilitate people organisations to take-up minor renovation works without depending on outside support. The intervention not only helped the community to renovate, but also brought vibrancy to the people organisations through a continuous engagement in the upkeep of tanks. The initial experimentation with the support of Sir Ratan Tata Trust reaped benefits to the community. Based on this experience, DHAN has scaled-up its endowment programme to reach more number of farmers. So far, more than 230 vayalagams have created endowment fund by mobilising donation from its members and other philanthropic institutions. The income out of endowment fund is continuously used for the annual repair and upkeep of the tanks.

Purpose of this Workshop

DHAN has gained deeper insights in administering the endowment programme for the tanks with more than a decade of engagement with the village communities around tanks. The Vayalagam Mutual Movement promoted by the farmers associations has developed policies, mechanisms and suggestive practices on how to use the income earned from the endowments. Madurai Symposium 2013 will be a platform to revisit the policies, mechanisms and practices; to build shared understanding, facilitate cross learning and make relevant changes in policies and develop new policies

based on the needs. Besides, the workshop will be an opportunity to position and mainstream the endowment concept. The outcome of this event will directly contribute to sustainable and community-led natural resource management.

Objectives

- To revisit and build a shared understanding on policy, mechanism and application of endowment fund.
- To create a platform for sharing experience and best practices among Vayalagams in using endowment fund.
- To promote effective fund management, institutional sustainability and identifying and addressing governance related issues.
- To evolve relevant policies and action plan for better endowment fund governance as a regular practice.

Participants

The workshop invites participants from Farmers' organisations from different districts in Tamil Nadu, Vayalagam Mutual Movement, development professionals and officials from government. . Farmers would share their experiences and contribute to evolving polices for effective use and management of endowment fund.

Expected outcome

- The Farmers Associations will have developed uniform policies and practices on application and management of funds.
- Regular maintenance of water bodies through vibrant people organisations.
- Concrete road map will be in place to overcome governance issues.
- Mechanisms and strategies will be evolved to institutionalise endowment fund creation to facilitate community-led water conservation.

Programme Schedule

- 09.30 AM : Registration
- 10.00 AM : Prayer and Welcome
- 10.15 AM : Purpose of Workshop
- 10.30 AM : Concept, Principle and Practice on Endowment Fund
- 11.00 AM : Endowment Fund Creation is our Tradition – Dr. Vedachalam
- 12.00 AM : Need and Importance for Creating Endowment Fund - Guest
- 12.30 PM : Sharing of Vayalagam Experience by Professionals and Leaders
- 01.30 PM : Lunch break
- 14.30 PM : Revisiting principles and norms – sub-group discussion
- 16.30 PM : Synthesis of group discussions
- 17.00 PM : Concluding remarks

Venue and Date of the Seminar

The seminar is planned to be organized in Thamukkam Grounds on 14th September 2013

Registration and contact

Kindly confirm your participation and send your papers if any, along with your travel details through email to:

A. Gurunathan, Chief Executive
K.N. Rajkumar, Sr. Project Executive
C. Kannan, Sr. Programme Associate
DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation,
No. 1A, Vaidyanathapuram East, Kennet Cross Road,
Near Seventh Day Adventist School,
Madurai 625 016, Tamilnadu, INDIA.
Ph: +91-452-2302580; Mobile: 9894686904
Email: dhantank@dhan.org,
Web: www.dhan.org



DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation, Madurai

Tankfed Agriculture Development Programme was one of the thematic programmes of DHAN Foundation towards the purpose of reducing rural poverty. For up scaling the tank programme and for enriching the water related development interventions, DHAN Foundation promoted DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation (DVTF) which became operational with effect from October 2, 2006. The DVTF is striving for the conservation and development of small scale traditional water resources such as tanks, ponds, ooranies, supply channels etc in addition to the development of watersheds through people's participation. At present DVTF is working in 6 States with the support of Government, National and International Corporate Philanthropies and other funding agencies.



DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation,
No. 1A, Vaidyanathapuram East, Kennet Cross Road,
Near Seventh Day Adventist School,
Madurai 625 016, Tamilnadu, INDIA.
Ph: +91-452-2302580; Fax: +91-452-2602247
Email: dhantank@ghan.org; Web: www.dhan.org