



Madurai Symposium 2015

Localizing Sustainable Development Goals

12-16 September, 2015



Bulletin

Day 2: 13 September 2015

Conventions

Stakeholders Convention on Alliances for Adolescent Girls' Health



“Iron deficiency anaemia is the single most and serious problem in the reproductive health of adolescent girls and should be handled very seriously”, said Ms. Rohini Ramadas, Additional Collector, Madurai. Speaking at the convention organized by SUHAM Trust on the theme of building alliances for adolescent girls’ health as part of Madurai symposium, she further said, “Open defecation may create the anaemic situation in the district and it should be addressed with the confidence of adolescent girls. The need of the hour is enhancing confidence level of adolescent girls, which is a big concern now”. She urged the mothers of adolescent girls to talk freely with their daughters about the menstrual cycle and other health problems which will build their confidence. She called the organisations working on this issue to focus on building the capacity of adolescent girls towards setting up of demand stream to relate with the mainstream healthcare system.

The SUHAM Trust, a healthcare initiative of DHAN Foundation and Kalanjiam Foundation jointly convened this stakeholders’ convention involving district administration, health department, Integrated Child Development Scheme, Schools, Health departments, local-body representatives, and people institutions to review the existing health and nutrition status of adolescent girls and evolving strategies and actions for fulfilling them through building an effective demand stream spearheaded by

Events

Conventions

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adolescent girls. The convention theme has a direct relevance with third SDG, ‘Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages’ and the fifth goal, ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’ towards empowering them to attain health, nutrition and hygiene practices. Mr. R. Rajapandian, Chief Executive of the SUHAM Trust coordinated the convention along with Ms. S. Ahila Devi, Team Leader, Kalanjiam Foundation. Around 600 adolescent girls from six districts of Tamilnadu participated in it.

Ms. Vasanthi, Project Officer from ICDS shared the nutritional deficiencies of adolescent girls and explained the importance about nutrition pyramid for balancing diets. She further highlighted the role of ICDS in imparting the nutritional status of adolescent girls through complementary foods. She brought the issue of improper use of napkins by adolescent girls which is directing to Poly Cystic Ovarian Disease and infertility, the education to girls should cover this problem during group meeting and school health. The school education department is contributing to adolescent girls’ health through school

level counseling clubs, napkin distribution, IFA & Albendazole supply and attending to physical and mental health of those girls.

Mr. M.P. Vasimalai, the Executive Director of DHAN Foundation said, “The issue of stunting and wasting of adolescent girls is incomparable with European countries, which needs serious attention. Percentage of low birth weight is high in our country which brought down the intellectual capacity of children and girls”. He further said, “Haemoglobin level of adolescent girls is a crucial factor that needs to be tackled with convergence strategies. There is a big gap in providing health education after school up to their marriage, which necessitates college level health education”. He appealed the participants to take forward the learning and messages from this convention and share with other members of their groups.

Smt. Chinnapillai appreciated that early marriages of adolescent girls has come down significantly over a period of time with the sincere efforts of Kalanjiam federations. The adolescent girls’ groups intervened on those areas to extend their education period and facilitated skill building for self employment. The health expenditure also has been reduced drastically due to behavioural change education.

The adolescent convention provided a clear picture to all the stakeholders on the need and problems of adolescent girl’s health. The adolescent girls from various blocks shared their experience with the adolescent girls’ groups and how it has impacted their behaviours and practices related to health, nutrition and hygiene. They expressed their learning through songs, poems, speech and dramas.

Stakeholders Consultation to Access to Market with Value Addition by Small Farm Holders

Kalanjiam Thozhilagam Limited, an exclusive livelihood support institution owned by the community convened stakeholders’ consultation to facilitate sustainable access to market by small farm holders through appropriate value chain. Nearly 50 small farm producers and shareholders of five producers’ companies from Salem, Tuticorin, Madurai and Dindigul districts in Tamil Nadu attended the consultation. After welcoming the participants, Mr. Chandrasekar, General Manager, KTL informed the members about development business with ‘fair trade’ practices of the company.

Mr. T. Dhanabalan, Chief Executive presented the turnover of the company and achievements in promoting sale of minor millets. He informed the stakeholders about the nomination of KTL as one of the resource institutions in Tamil Nadu to promote Farmers’ Producers Company by Small Farmers Agriculture Consortium (SFAC) under Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. The SFAC had granted four FPOs to KTL to promote which are in the process of registration. These FPOs would support the market linkage with value addition of crops such as chillies, pulses, varagu (kodo millet) and samai (little

millet). Further he added that the KTL would adopt less energy intensive operations and would take all possible measures to control and reduce the consumption of energy. Kitchen garden seeds with a view of enhancing nutritional security among poor farm households and landless women were distributed to more than 1.5 lakhs seed pockets in the last cropping season that resulted significant quantum of harvest of highly nutritive vegetables.

Mr. S. Singarayar, Chairperson of KTL congratulated the producers and insisted to enrol more shareholders in the respective company in order to increase the business volume and sustain the growth.

The FPOs came out with a plan to execute a business plan comprising an annual turnover of One crore rupees for each FPO and the producers expressed their need for quality inputs at right time and for fair price so as to cut down the cost of production. Also they resolved to identify and initiate direct market linkage for the produces and value added products of members. In order to begin value addition of produces, they expressed need for setting up processing infrastructure.

Inclusive Future: Convention of Panchayat Leaders with Participatory Governance

Panchayat Programme of DHAN Foundation organised this convention with more than 100 women participants representing ward members, panchayat presidents and councillors from Madurai, Dindugal, Theni, Cuddalore and Nagai districts, Tamilnadu. This convention focused on 5th SDG – achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Mr. P. Mohan, from Panchayat Administration department in Madurai, emphasised the involvement of women in the public sphere. With proper training and orientation on operational procedure and rules, the women representatives can manage their Panchayats very well. He insisted on regularising panchayat meeting, focusing on service to the people, getting support from various stakeholders, empowering the community. He requested to ensure open defecation free village by utilising the government schemes.

Mr. K. Vallinayagam, an Expert in Panchayat



Administration insisted women to acquire knowledge and said “The growth of women will be the indicator of growth of the society. Women’s cooperation is must for village development. To address the resource constraint, the leaders have to closely work with district administration to tap funds for development of the Panchayat”.

Mrs. Saravana Biju, Advocate and women activist, Madurai, spoke on “Motivation of women panchayat leaders”. She insisted to ensure education for women and to get understanding and knowledge about the external world in order to lead the panchayat development.

Mr. S. Singarayar, Programme Leader, Panchayat Programme, presented a lead paper on “Best practices and challenges of women president”. He focused on women leaders’ performance and governance at panchayat. Fifty percent of the leaders’ performances are not upto the mark; another 15 percent are doing excellent and the remaining 35 percent are in between these two levels, and they would move towards good performance. Further he listed the best practices from the field and challenges faced by the women elected panchayat leaders.

In sub-groups the participants discussed the best initiatives and achievements of women leaders and challenges at family, social and administrative levels, and way forward. The subgroup presentations were facilitated by the domain experts N.S. Chidambaram and K. Subramanian.

The women Panchayat representatives got awareness on the fifth SDG. The participants understood the importance of initiatives taken at grass roots level for empowering the women and girls. The third tier government – Panchayat, has an important role in contributing for gender equality at the grassroots level. If the panchayat gets enough opportunities and resources to address the issues faced by women and girl children, women headed Panchayats expressed their readiness to take them up immediately.

Self Regulation Practices for Sustaining Financial Inclusion

Kalanjiam Mutual Movement (KMM) organised this convention with more than 300 Kalanjiam leaders and



members. All these participants were from 174 Kalanjiam Federations working in more than 14 Indian states. This convention focused on sustaining financial inclusion through self-regulation.

Ms. Shanthi Maduresan, CEO, KMM, shared achievements of KMM. She insisted to enrol all the Kalanjiam federations and Kalanjiam groups into KMM and to spread the self-regulation practices across all groups, clusters and federations. Also, she shared about the de-addiction movement launched in Tamilnadu through a signature campaign. She explained about key areas of Movement’s intervention such as protecting women from violence, ensuring justice for women and empowering them.

Ms. Padmashankari from Kalanjiam Programme shared the financial goals of KMM like creating corpus fund through enrolment contribution by Kalanjiam groups, clusters and Federations and through Kalanjiam Jothi fund (voluntary contribution by members). Also she explained about time support of Rs. 6.5 lakhs to assist the people suffered due to Phailin cyclone in Vizag region of Andhra Pradesh. Many leaders promised to pay their one day income as annual contribution to KMM.

Ms. A. Umarani, CEO, Kalanjiam Foundation insisted on self-regulation practices. She requested the leaders to visit at least 10 percent of the groups in their federations for monitoring the groups and staff performance, to ensure proper conduct of meetings in cluster and federation.

All federation leaders and board members of Kalanjiam Mutual Movement have decided to intensify the mutually as value practice to achieve the self-growth through their own contribution of Jothi Fund and they will also extend cross guarantee to federations in need.

Self-regulation will become regular core agenda of federation and cluster and the practice will be enabled by central movement through capacity building of staff and leaders. This self-regulation will help build a new social order with self-regulation as a value. This will ultimately lead to women empowerment and leadership with good governance.

Women Convention on Inclusive Growth - Success Stories of Kalanjiam Members Moving Out of Poverty

Marking the 25th year celebrations of successful Community Banking initiative for poverty eradication, DHAN Foundation’s Kalanjiam Programme organised a women’s convention to deliberate on inclusive development and success stories of the people, who had moved out of poverty. The convention focused on understanding the factors that contributed to graduate the poor women who were in survival category into self-employed state. Also the convention tried to identify areas of interventions to facilitate faster movement of people to escape from poverty. The first Goal of SDG attempts to end poverty in all forms everywhere. Seven targets of Goals

were discussed for localizing and integrate them in to the design of Kalanjiam Community Banking Programme of DHAN.

The participants were from Kalanjiam Federations functioning in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and other northern States. The participants were made into state wise sub-groups and asked to envision growth of their Kalanjiams in 2040.

The highlights of the discussion are:

- 1) All the people in survival category will be identified and brought into Kalanjiams. The Kalanjiam programme would evolve policies to address the issues of people in such category to bring them out of poverty.
- 2) Family level Goals setting will be facilitated by involving family members to address the poverty in all its dimensions. At each family level focus will be given on enhancing livelihoods to increase their income, access to health, higher education to promote dignity, access to women rights and justice through legal services.
- 3) All basic needs will be fulfilled through mainstream linkages and entitlements through Panchayat linkage for social security, access to technology and skill building for promoting new livelihood activities.
- 4) Building resilience community to cope with disasters by specialised funds and mutuality contributions by the people.
- 5) Grassroots democracy will be promoted and strengthened by participating in Panchayat meeting and advancing Panchayat linkages.

The leader also went through visioning exercise for 2040 and came out with following propositions:

- 1) 70 percent of the poor families particularly at survival level will be out of poverty.
- 2) Kalanjiam member will have a healthy family and next generation will not slip into poverty.
- 3) Children of Kalanjiam members would have got higher education.
- 4) Quality of life of all Kalanjiam members would have increased.
- 5) Special products and services would be implemented to support the ultra-poor.
- 6) All government entitlements would have been brought into Kalanjiam families.
- 7) Identity for Kalanjiam families would have been created through value practices.
- 8) People would lead the advocacy of pro-poor policies.

Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

Workshop on Preparing Business Plan of FPOs

Rainfed Farming Development Programme (RFDP) of DHAN and NABARD, Chennai jointly organised this workshop to guide representatives from nine Producer Organisations (FPO) promoted by DHAN in Tamil Nadu including executives and directors for preparing business plan for their FPOs. Representatives of FPOs from other states such as Telangana, Odisha, Karnataka, Bihar, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh learned the steps and processes of evolving business plan. This workshop organised as part of Madurai Symposium aimed at promoting FPOs through the collective effort of the farmers and to ensure the profit to members and their organisations through business activities.

Dr. S. Mahesh, DDM, NABARD, Madurai, insisted that plan is necessary is to reach goal, business should be profitable. He also explained five step processes for FPOs namely, (1) Generating business ideas, 2. Analysing opportunities and threats, 3. Identifying business opportunities, 4. Evolving marketing plan and 5. Preparing financial plan for FPO.

Mr. G.H. Manuel, VRUTTI, Madurai explained steps to develop a strategic plan for FPOs such as scanning the environment, evolving shared vision for the organisation, developing a series of goals or organisational vision statements, developing strategies to reach the goals, preparing annual action plan, evolving procedures for monitoring, modifying the strategies based on changes in the external environment or the organisation.

Mrs. Vanitha Karikalan, Director, Nachalur Farmers Producer Company Limited explained her experiences in promoting FPO, which was started in 2012 in Nachalur with 50 members from 32 villages, and grew with 757 members with the share capital of Rs 5000 from each farmer. First year they made a profit of Rs 27000 and in 2013-14 their profit rose to Rs 2.5 lakhs with the total turnover of Rs 1.25 crores. From her experience, in the initial period there will not be much profit, and the issue as



high cost of inputs, which has to be reduced. The value addition of products should be done coupled with stocking of produces in ware houses to sell at times of high demand for gaining more profit. She started the FPO for processing rice, during off season she processed sorghum and sold for export. In the first year itself they took dealership of fertilizer and pesticides and the farmers got benefited directly. This growth attracted many other farmers to join in the FPO.

Mr. V.A. Ragavan, AGM, NABARD, Chennai, suggested the farmers to plan based on their strength and not with the suggestions from outsiders. It should include elements such as executive summary, business description, industry/ sector analysis, marketing plan, operational plan, and financial plan.

All the FPO directors made an attempt to prepare their business plan in sub groups and shared it in the plenary. All the FPO's have listed out the business activities they would take up. Out of the listed business activities they chose three promising business activities and explained why they chose them. With the inputs from resource persons all the directors of FPOs committed to prepare detailed business plan in consultation with its members and experts.

Community Workshop on Best Practices in Water Sector (Irrigation Tanks and Ponds)

Sixth Sustainable Development Goal focuses on ensuring water and sanitation availability for all. In an effort towards localizing this goal, DHAN Foundation's People Academy organised a community workshop to document and debate on the best practices in conservation and development of water resources, particularly tanks and ponds. About 40 participants attended the workshop.

The workshop made an attempt to enlist the best practices from conservation and development of water resources by farmers from Gundar region. The best practices identified by the participants were alternative water harvesting mechanisms by deepening ponds, construction of farm ponds; Systematic Rice Intensification (SRI) methods. The significant impact of these interventions helped the members to manage the water effectively at their farm



level. The traditional practices such as application of nutrient rich silt from tanks on the catchment area made the farmers to cope with risks associated with dry spells in the region. The best practices from five Vayalagam programme districts of Gundar basin reflect the following for wide adoption.

- In rainfed areas, the water harvested during seasonal and unseasonal rainfall in farm ponds helps the farmers to irrigate the crops in critical water requirement periods and reduces the risk of crop failure or increased the yield. Also, the trees planted, vegetable cultivated in and around farm ponds reduces the soil erosion and fish rearing in ponds doubled their incomes.
- Tank silt application to agriculture lands changed the physical and chemical prosperities of soil like changes in color, micro organisms, which in turn increased the fertility and moisture holding capacity of the soil. Due to this intervention, in crops such as Banana and Coconut irrigation number of wettings reduced from three to two.
- Ooranis are the best decentralized solution for drinking water, where the ground water is saline and carrying heavy loads of iron content. The foods cooked by using Oorani water (filtered by traditional treatment) have lengthy keeping quality and taste compared with the food cooked by using Cauvery combined water supply scheme and ground water.
- Tanks, ponds and other small scale water bodies are the ones which can ensure water for all in tank intensive districts in the state and hence the Vayalagam movement has to spearhead tank conservation mechanisms in the needy villages.

Pathways to Sustainable Water Resources Management in South India - Role of Water Knowledge Centre

This workshop organised on the second day of Madurai Symposium focused on the critical determinant 'Water' that will decide the foremost goal of ending hunger and achieving food security and improved nutrition. Adhinarayanan, Programme Leader, DHAN Foundation made a lead presentation highlighting the need for working pathways to achieve SDGs.

"Sustainable food production is possible only when we manage our water resources sustainably", said Dr. P. Selvan, Assistant Engineer, Department of Agricultural engineering, Madurai. He further added that the ill-effects of climate change on food production needs to be tackled to ensure food security of the millions.

Mr. C.P. Mohankumar, Assistant engineer, Public Works Department, in his technical note said, "India is the world's seventh largest country by area. It is home to the second-largest country by population, with more than 1.2 billion people. The diverse geography and agro-climatic variation poses real challenges for achieving sustainable development goals. While the land area is finite, population increase puts pressure on land and water



resources; there is an urgent need to protect the water resources from being destroyed in the name of development". He further added "In grain-producing agricultural regions, energy subsidies for pumping wells intended to avert a food crisis led farmers to overuse groundwater. Economic inequality unplanned settlements in urban areas undermine access to water for basic needs and drive counter intuitive disparities in prices paid for water".

"There exists huge potential to augment the storage of water resources. For example in Vaigai river, which traverses 254 km, having eight tributaries, eight reservoirs with 1411 tanks shows huge scope for saving water. We can store 11 TMC of water in the tanks spread in Vaigai river basin. Therefore, sustainable water resource management easily could be achieved by doing continuous maintenance of tanks which are already existing in Vaigai basin", he concluded.

Practitioners from the States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telengana attended the workshop and shared their ground experiences in addressing issues in water conservation and some of their success stories.

As water moves in time and space consistent with the hydrological cycle, the term 'water management' covers a variety of activities and disciplines. Broadly speaking, these can be divided into three categories: managing the resource, managing water services, and managing the trade-offs needed to balance supply and demand. The management of water is not merely a technical issue; it requires a mix of measures including changes in policies, prices and other incentives, as well as infrastructure and physical installations. Integrated water resources management (IWRM) focuses on the necessary integration of water management across sectors, policies and institutions.

Seminar on Improved Sanitation and Septage Management

"Designating and implementing integrated city sanitation plan is the need of the hour to build smart cities being promoted by the Government today. The current situation

of sanitation and waste management is dismal and critical", said Praveen Nagaraju, Sanitation expert from Consortium for decentralised waste water treatment Dissemination Society (CDD), Bangalore. He presented the 'Decentralised Waste Water Treatment' model in the Workshop on Improved Sanitation and Septage Management at the second day of the Madurai Symposium organised on localising sustainable development goals (SDGs).

"The existing system of waste water treatment requires the government to transport wastes from the cities to specific treatment plants, where chemicals and electric equipments are used to treat the wastes. These are not only expensive, but also disruptions in electricity supply render the system ineffective and wastes are discharged partially or untreated", he added.

He further reiterated that unsafe septic tanks pose threat of mixing of drinking water and underground water with septic tank wastes, also known as faecal sludge. Collection and disposal of septic tank wastes is becoming an issue due to inadequate infrastructure for collection, treatment and safe disposal. It needs an integrated and comprehensive city sanitation plan with adoption of efficient technologies in the growing cities.

Dr. K. Arunachalam, Professor and Head, Department of Civil Engineering, Thiagarajar College of Engineering (TCE) in his inaugural address said "People who spend money in building new houses should allocate a portion to build safe sanitation and hygiene infrastructure within the home".

Dr. Chandran, Associate Professor, TCE presented a technical paper on the issues of poor septage management. He said "There exists huge gap between how much waste water was collected and how much was treated. Letting off waste water untreated into water bodies like lakes and ponds pose serious threat to these water bodies. The people's mindset should undergo a sea change in handling the wastes".

'Ensure sustainable management of water and sanitation



for all' is one of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) awaiting acceptance by all the nations at United Nations this September. Improved sanitation and septage management is a continuing issue in the developing and under developed countries. Septage refers to decomposed sludge derived from properly constructed septic tanks, which needs to be collected, treated and disposed safely. This is a critical issue at the juncture when the Government of India identified cities to transform them into 'Smart Cities'. Participants for this workshop discussed on sanitation issues in the proposed smart cities and their implications in achieving SDGs amidst ambitious Clean India drive.

The decentralised waste water treatment (DEWATS) relies on self-cleaning nature of water and decentralised management to tackle the issue, which requires cluster of users like housing colonies and office complexes. This DEWATS system collects water from an area and treats through a series of processes, without requiring chemicals or electricity. Even a semi-skilled person can easily handle this system, which requires very minimal maintenance. Communities can easily manage this system. However the downside is that it requires initial investments to build the system, the communities find it difficult to take up, since individuals will have to bear the costs. What is needed is continuous education of the communities to build community stake and ownership. The system depends heavily on the personal sense of responsibility for handling the wastes generated by the people.

Relevance of Heritage: Madurai Excavation Immersion for Sustainable Village Development

"Excavation in Keezhadi village near Madurai unearthed the ancient civilisation of Tamilnadu. Many rare and archeologically important artefacts and materials used by the ancient people came out from this excavation", said Dr. Vedhachalam, Archaeologist.



Participants from Madurai symposium along with general public took out a heritage walk to the excavation site in the morning of second day of Madurai Symposium 2015. The 'Tourism for Development' programme of DHAN Foundation organised this walk. Addressing the participants of the Walk, he said "The ancient communities inhabited this region were found to be literate, which could interpreted from the Tamil Brahmi letter inscribed pieces of pots available on the site", he added.

From the excavation we can infer that the village was a popular trade centre. Presence of Arretine ware and Rouletted Wares in this region, beads made of Agate, Carnelian and Quartz point the trade links this village had with countries like Rome. More than 10,000 people visited this site so far, which is encouraging that there is widespread interest to learn the ancient roots.

This Village was finally chosen after reviewing more than 200 sites along the banks of river Vaigai, said Dr. Amarnath Ramakrishna, lead Archaeologist of this site. "People's cooperation is overwhelming. We are prepared to take up an elaborate excavation soon", he added. The villagers expressed interest to set-up a permanent museum with the material found in the site. Historian Dr. Venkatraman, academicians, students from colleges around Madurai took part in the Walk.

In the afternoon session at Thamukkam, participants reflected on the visit experiences and got clarifications from the domain experts.

Exhibition

The exhibition opened for the public on the sideline of Madurai symposium had forty Exhibition stalls displaying arts, handicrafts, and embroidery goods manufactured by women Self-Help Groups, Vaigai River Restoration Awareness, Skill building to youth and students and bank products of IDBI, Canara Bank, Indian bank, Minor millets and Batik crafts. Ms. Thayammal, Secretary, Mutual Movement and Mr. M. Kalyanasundaram, Chief Executive of International Network for Alternative Financial Institutions-India in the evening of September 12, 2015. The general public from Madurai and the Symposium participants visited the exhibition in the evening hours. The exhibition would remain in Thamukkam from September 12 to 15, 2015 for the people to visit and purchase handicrafts and know more about the programmes done by different NGOs. Earlier, the organizers took out a road show with the mobile theatre to publicise the Madurai Symposium including the exhibition, development film festival and the folk arts, cultural programme organised for the public.

