



Center for Womens Development and Research

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Education to Empower 500 Women and Adolescent girls

One of the major changes happened in the fishing communities after Tsunami is women could able to come out and talk, even though it is a small change it is big beginning for women's empowerment. Men realize the important role played by women after Tsunami in running the families and also in rebuilding the communities, but there is resistance to include women in the traditional Panchayath (village councils). After nearly three years most of the rehabilitation works are over not many International donors or government official are visiting, now it is the right time to talk about gender disparities in the community. Recently Government of India Ministry of Environment had announced a proposed new CZM-Coastal Zone Management plan, already the fishing community is opposing this saying that would affect the traditional fishing and deny their livelihood sources. So now it is become more important to find sustainable alternative income sources for the fishing community particularly for the women.

Training programmes for women:



“Maithri” Resource centre for Women

From our earlier experiences we have decided to encourage women to start group business so that they can invest considerable capital and also run a viable business. So we are providing entrepreneurship skills to women. We have also identified few business like Seeweed cultivation, mushroom cultivation, Palm leaf product making, Nursery raising, making dry fish using solar energy. We have trained 4 groups of women each group with 20 participants. A group of women also visited a Spirulina Algae growing farm. After the nursery raising training women have raised 40,000 Jatropha oilseed bearing seedlings.



Local level meeting with women

In addition to that we have organized women's development and leadership skill training programmes for all the local level women's groups nearly 400 women benefited from these programmes. In all these programmes single women are given preference. We have also organize separate income generation training programmes and leadership trainings for single women. Nearly 95 single women participated in these programmes. We have also provided loans to 20 single women to improve their present business like selling fish, eatables, small fancy stores, selling clothes and flower.

We have recently inaugurated "Maithri" (friendship) Resource centre for Women and adolescent girls. This provides us the needed infra-structure to conduct trainings for women and adolescent girls. We also have initiated work to construct hand made soap making unit. Recently we have also sent 2 boys to Khadhi Institute to learn to make hand made soap.



Women and girls learning to make palm leaf products

Life skill and sexuality education for adolescent girls:

We are continuing our life skill and sexuality education for adolescent girls. Nearly 280 adolescent girls participated in the weekend workshops. We have also organized short term trainings in screen printing, paper bag making, palm leaf product making, embroidery and nearly 300 girls benefited from these trainings. We have initiated “Snehidi” adolescent girls associations in these villages and all the adolescent girls who participated in our trainings are members of it. We have also created a website www.snehidhi.org in Tamil for adolescent girls, the site has sexuality education, self development, tuition, doctors page, question and answer and their own pages. That can be used by all adolescent girls who knows Tamil. Regular classes in Tailoring and computer skills are conducted in our centres. More than 200 girls attended these programmes.



Life skill and sexuality education workshop



As part of strengthening the local level primary education of government schools we have appointed an additional teacher in the Naynarkuppm School, she is continuing.

We would call this as second phase of our work in Tsunami rehabilitation, earlier our focus was more on providing relief and late rehabilitating their lives by building their livelihood sources. During this phase in addition to income generation programmes we are also focusing more on gender and development, human rights for women.