

CORD Siruvani—Annual report—April 01, 2008 to March 31,2009

By Poojya Gurudev's Grace and Poojya Guruji's Blessings, CORD Siruvani has had the following activities/accomplishments during the year.



CORD Siruvani has been working in the Thennamanallur Panchayat which has four villages—Thennamanallur, S G Palayam, Kallimedu and Puthur. In addition, tribal villages of Seengapathi and Sadivayal as well as Nallurvayal, Semmedu and C G Pudur have been covered throughout the year. From November 2008, a new Panchayat has been added—Dhaliyur.

Thennamanallur Panchayat has a total of 645 families and a total population of 2400 (as noted in 2007). There are 130 children below 5 years of age; 10% of the families are below the poverty line and the literacy rate is 50 %. Dhaliyur Panchayat has a population of about 7500 spread over 7 villages with an equal number of men and women. 20 % of the families are below the poverty line.

Health related activities:



Community-based health care

Four villages were covered by our regular allopathy clinics—Thennamanallur, S G Palayam, Semmedu, C G Pudur. Six villages got coverage by Siddha and Homeo clinics. In the clinics, the villagers got diagnosis & treatment for all the common acute illnesses as well as chronic ailments like bronchial asthma, diabetes, hypertension and orthopedic problems. The clinics also provided awareness on various health issues and sensitized the villagers to adopt preventive measures.

Sanitation :



Around 100 villagers below the poverty line have received DRI loans from the local IOB and Canara Bank till date and of them 70 have built toilets and the rest are in the process of building the toilets.

In addition, the villagers in all the villages and many families in Coimbatore city have begun segregating the waste at source into biodegradable and non-biodegradable

categories. The non-biodegradable category includes papers and plastic which are further segregated at source and given to CORD Siruvani for sending to the local paper plant. Waste from banks and schools are also properly segregated under our guidance.

Supervising the village conservancy workers, motivating the villagers to use only cloth bags and baskets and encouraging the shopkeepers to use paper packets for packaging has been definitely effective. For this, CORD Siruvani got an ECO award from the Residents' Awareness Association of Coimbatore(RAAC) and the Association of British Scholars.



Self-Help Groups and Income generation Activites:



Nine Self-Help Groups have been formed and are being looked after by CORD Siruvani. There are a total of 113 members in all the groups together. Together, they have saved Rs.1,20,000 and have an internal loaning of Rs. 1,10,000. Four groups have received bank loans totalling to Rs.2,10,000.

Paper packet and paper bag making has made the villagers earn around Rs.15,000 in the last year. Three to four women from Thennamanallur have taken the initiative for this. The main buyers are the local shopkeepers and the Chinmaya International Residential School (CIRS). CIRS has been buying our paper bags for giving crackers to children during Diwali and colour powders during Holi.

Phenyl made by the local women who need the income has now found a market in the local shops, homes, banks and the Chinmaya Schools of Coimbatore.

Ginger, garlic and lime pickles made by one of the SHGs has found many customers.

Door mats made of waste banian cloth are very colorful and have found a good market.

Incense sticks, pain balm and palm leaf baskets are the other products which have helped the villagers generate income.



Mabila Mandal (Women groups):

The women of four villages namely Thennamnallur, S.G.Palayam, Puttur and Kallimedu have been meeting for the Mahila Mandal meetings. Two of these have been meeting regularly and are able to conduct their own meetings and have registered with the Government and Nehru Yuva Kendra. They are part of the self-help groups and the income-generation activity groups and have been taking part in all the other activities. Three more Mahila Mandals are in the making—one more in Puthur, one in Dhaliyur and one in Kallimedu. During the meetings the women were shown CDs on important issues such as alternative sources of energy. During the Mahila Mandal meetings we have had special invitees speak to them to create awareness. The women have put up stalls in various places to sell their products.

The women have been conducting monthly Velakku Pooja in the CORD office. Children and women arrange the Pooja and participate actively.



Awareness programme:



Workers' Awareness Programmes (sponsored by Central Govt.) of two days duration each were conducted in three places—Dhaliyoor, Kallimedu and Semmedu. During these two days women learnt about various Govt. schemes, health and hygiene, SHGs and other important issues.

Dr Meera attended the UNICEF-sponsored Emergency Preparedness awareness camp organized for NGOs. Earlier she attended another four day meet in Mettupalayam on Total Waste Management, another UNICEF-sponsored camp for NGOs. The Red Ribbon Express troupe staged a programme in Thennamnallur village on the 12th of July 2008. The Mahila Mandal made the necessary arrangements with the help of COD. The programme created awareness on HIV/AIDS among the local people.

On 5th of June, 2008, the World Environment Day, several ladies were taken to an outlet which sells eco-friendly things in Coimbatore city.

Balavadi and Balavibar (Personality development classes):



Ten Balvihar classes have been conducted once a week in the various villages to inculcate good habits in the children through stories, bhajans and plays. The children have participated in various sanitation activities and awareness programmes. Improving their reading and writing skills has been an important activity incorporated in the Balavihars.

Ms D Sathya, an MSW student of Amruta Vishwa Vidya Peetham, Coimbatore worked in CORD as a volunteer trainee for one month during April 2008. She helped in all the activities of CORD and was instrumental in inspiring and increasing the involvement of

the children. She taught them several street-plays, songs and dances. She continues to visit CORD and motivate the villagers.

A personality development camp was held in the local school for children from the fifth to the ninth standards. Around 70 children participated in the 3-day camp. Poojya Swamini Vimalananda inaugurated the camp and guided the children. Sri Sushantji, Sri Hariharanji and Ramya a CHYK worker interacted with the children and taught them several things.

Community-based Rehabilitation(CBR): The number of physically challenged people in remote areas receiving professional guidance has increased and many of them are rehabilitated. Smt Rukmini, Sri Aruchamy. Mr Gandhi and others have received physiotherapy and borrowed walkers from CORD for rehabilitation. Sri Govindaraj, paralysed below the hip has been admitted in one of the leading Spine surgery hospitals in Coimbatore for corrective surgery. CORD Siruvani has helped him by channelising all kinds of help for him and his family.

Mr Senthil, a physiotherapist, has been coming to Thennamanallur village and giving physiotherapy to several needy villagers. He is also teaching the CORD workers so that they can help the physically challenged on their own.



Yuva and Yuwati groups:





There are five Yuva groups registered with Nehru Yuva Kendra. The Youth of Thennamanallur (Gandhi colony) organized a sports and cultural event during Pongal (Makara Sankranti). Rangoli competition was held for the women. Both the local youth and youth from Annur have been cleaning the village off and on.

Mohan, a Youth Empowerment Programme graduate assigned to CORD Siruvani took four of our Thennamanallur Youth to participate in the CHYK camp held in Kodaikanal from the 15th to the 17th of August 2008. The Youth of Thennamanallur organized a Sarvajanic Ganesh Chaturthi programme and also a Velakku Pooja on the 3rd and 4th of September. The boys of Thennamanallur also cleaned and painted the temple and planted trees. On the 21st September, boys from our youth clubs donated blood in the camp organized by the Sree Satya Sai Mission. The MM members and the Youth Club members attended a 3-day games training programme conducted by Nehru Yuva Kendra. The Yuvati group, though small, met on the last Sunday of every month to discuss various issues.

The Youth Groups of Puttur planted several trees as part of the World Environment Day programme. They have also participated in the village cleaning drives. The Nehru Yuva Kendra coordinator, Mr Velmurugan addressed the youth on the need to utilise the various facilities being offered. The IBM students of Chinmaya International Residential School (CIRS) Coimbatore, have been visiting the tribal villages with the CORD workers every Saturday. They have been teaching the children songs, plays and also cleaning and painting the local school.

Panchayati Raj:

The CORD team and the MM members have participated in the Gram Sabha meetings held in the various villages. We have contributed ideas and suggestions during the meetings.

Networking and Training:

The villagers and the CORD Siruvani team members have been networking with various Govt. and Non-Govt. Organizations. Five representatives of CReNIEO (Centre for Research on New International Economic Order) stayed with us in CORD in the month of April for five days and shared the experiences of their rural development work in Yercaud amongst the tribals there.

Dr Meera attended the UNICEF-sponsored programme on Emergency Preparedness for NGOs. Dr Meera also attended the function in which the Best Vocational awards were presented to several people in various professions by the Rotary Club of Coimbatore. The CORD workers visited the Amruta University and interacted with the

students and faculty of the Social Welfare department. They exchanged information on disaster management and saw the process of waste management and composting in the Amruta University Campus. The CORD workers attended a programme on gender equality and HIV awareness conducted in the local Primary Health Centre.

Sri A Devaraj, UNICEF Project Coordinator on Environment, Water and Sanitation for Kerala and Tamilnadu visited the CORD office and interacted with the workers and the Balavihar children. Sri Thyagarajan of Tulsi Seva Trust interacted with the women of the Mahila Mandal. Mr Yussuf Ali Khan, mass health educator also addressed one of the Mahila Mandal sessions.

The first year MSW students from Amruta University in Ettimadai, Coimbatore visited CORD Siruvani and interacted with us. Members of CORD Siruvani attended the Children's day celebration in Thondamuthur organised by the local youth club. On the 18th of November CORD Siruvani was invited to participate in the Sampoorana Gram Vikas programme of Indian Overseas Bank, Thondamuthur. CORD Siruvani was formally invited to look after the complete development of Dhaliyur village and a nearby tribal village. Thenamanallur beneficiaries were given loans to build toilets in their houses. The Self Help Group Women planted trees and also took part in the function in the local Blind School. A team consisting of Suruchiji, Sri Vinodji and Sri Narenderji from CORD Sidhbari visited us in the end of November 2008 and stayed with us for three days to guide us in various activities.



Volunteers:

We have had volunteers from India and abroad who supported the activities by giving their valuable time and also helped in cash and kind.

- Mr U Senthilrajan, a physiotherapist has been coming every week to help the physically challenged and participate in the youth activities.
- Sri Janardhanji, a Dharam Sevak from Chinmaya Gardens came to teach Bhajans.
- Dr Punitha Vijayakumar and her daughter Nithya from Michigan were in CORD Siruvani from the 22nd to the 28th of June 2008. Dr. Punitha being a Neurologist examined several patients and gave her valuable guidance and opinion regarding their treatment. Nithya Vijayakumar volunteered in several activities and interacted with the children.
- Sri Mohan, a YEP graduate has joined CORD Siruvani and has been interacting with the youth to make them participate actively in rural development.
- Dr Ram Natash from Dallas and Sri Radhakrishnan from Chennai visited the villages and interacted with the children.

- Smt Meena of Coimbatore came to CORD Siruvani office on many days and taught the villagers making several handicrafts.
- Smt Neena Sasidharan of Coimbatore came and interacted with the children and taught them handicrafts.
- Parents from the Chinmaya Mission, Los Angeles and youth from the CHYK, Los Angeles volunteered in CORD Siruvani from the 22nd of December 2008 till the 2nd January 2009. The team consisted of Sri Bala Bharadwaj, Smt. Ramaa Bharadwaj, Dr Vijaya Cherukuri, Smt Nimmy Raj, Smt. Geeta Senra, Anand Cherukuri, Adarsh Cherukuri, Ravind Kumar, Kum. Medha Raj, Kum. Ayesha and Kum. Preethika. They interacted with the villagers, taught the children dances and Bhajans, beautified and repaired the CORD office, repaired the electrical and electronic systems in the office and also conducted a free dental camp. The interaction was elevating and mutually beneficial.
- Sri Badri Narayan from Toronto, Canada was with CORD Siruvani for a few days during December 2008. Being a doctor, he made home visits and also treated the patients coming to our clinics.
- Smt. Karpagam Ramalingam, from Coimbatore donated 30 tree guards for the trees being looked after in the local school for the differently abled.
- Sri Sankara Manavalan, helps with the Balavihar.
- Dr Nikhil Tanna, from the CHYK group in London joined us in March 2009. Being a doctor and an interested teacher, he has been helping us with treating patients and teaching the Balavihar children.
- Kum Janki Pattni, also from London, joined CORD Siruvani as a volunteer in the end of March 2009. She has been helping us with teaching the children and other activities.



