

# CHINMAYA ORGANISATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## (C O R D)

### At THAMARAIPAKKAM (Thiruvallur District) Tamil Nadu.

### Descriptive Report on activities during the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010

*(Please ignore the dates given by the Camera on the Photographs)*

#### Women's Empowerment:

As on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010, there are 65 SHGs under CORD's fold. Membership is about 1200 women.



**CORD Stall in Guruji's Maha Yagna in Chennai**

SHGs 65 GROUPS	OVER 1200 MEMBERS
TOTAL SAVING	RS 69.12 LAKS
INTERNAL LOANS	RS 90.00 LAKS

Bank linkage for 26 groups .Total loans disbursed: Rs.13 Lacs by UCO Bank, Velliyur and Canara Bank, Vengal for one SHG

There are 7 Magalir Mandrams (Mahila Mandals) formed in 3 villages (4 in Thamarapakkam, 1 in Magaral & 2 in Ramanathapuram)

**\*(CORD's stall at Maha yagna in Feb 2010 was adjudged the best stall and awarded 1st Prize)**

Our work on the area of women's empowerment is facing severe impediments from TN Govt's Scheme "VAZHNTU KATTUVOM THITTAM" operational in our area ELLAPURAM Block where they Claim Monopoly of working with Govt's support. and funds from World Bank.

### **Livelihood Training Programs for Women:**

#### **Paper Carry Bags Making:**

Chinmaya Thazhampoo SHG at Sivanvayol has matured into a self supporting group on this activity. As reported earlier the Micro Finance of Rs.12, 000 was arranged by us for this SHG from the Rotary Club of Madras-Mid Town Chennai.

#### **Temple Jewelry Making:**

The Group of Women SHG from Pandeswaram Village who were Trained in this trade is continuing this activity.

#### **Tailoring & Dress Making Classes:**

Now we have 3 Tailoring & Dress Making Classes one each in Thamarapakkam, Pandeswaram & Pakkam Villages. More than 60 Girl Students and women from Self Help groups are benefited from this training.

#### **At Thamarapakkam:**

Since inception in 2006, 117 Students have completed the six months' Training. At least 40 past students are earning of about Rs.2000/- pm with the skill acquired. The current (6<sup>th</sup>) batch has 30 students in two groups of 15 each. The classes are held from 11 AM to 1 PM and from 2 to 4 PM. The students of current batch offer participatory contribution of Rs.100/- each and the amount are used to pay the Honorarium to the lady instructor & maintenance of Machines. Vazhnthu Kattuvom Thittam is planning a FEEE Tailoring Class in this village. We plan to add at least 3 more sewing machines for Thamarapakkam.

#### **At Pandeswaram Village:**

A Tailoring & Dress Making Centre was started January 2009 at Pandeswaram Village (with 4 Machines) at the initiative of SHG Members from the village. The first batch of twenty women completed the course by end July 2009. The Second batch of 15 Ladies is now on.

#### **At Pakkam Village:**

A Tailoring & Dress making Centre was started on March 2010 at Pokka panjayath (with 4 Machines) the first batch of 12 women was getting the training.



**New Tailoring centre in Pakkam panjayath**

**Computer Based Adult Literacy Program (CoBAL):**

After successful completion of the CoBAL programme in Magaral Mettu Colony (December 2008 - March 2009) where about 50 Adult women learnt Tamil alphabets, we started this programme in two other hamlets in Thamaraipakkam Panchayath benefiting 40 more adults.

**Rotary/ CORD Gomatha Project:**

The Scheme started in February 2009 is being continued with periodical visit of our Sevak and Veterinary Surgeon visiting the beneficiaries. Two cows and a calf died of an epidemic. The other animals are healthy and yielding Milk. Three Cows of the beneficiaries have given birth to Calves (Two Females & one Male).

We are guiding the beneficiaries to grow Co3 Grass for the Cows and this scheme is yet to take off. Plans for marketing the Milk at an economic rate is also being worked out.

## **Development of Youth and Children**

**Livelihood Training Program for Youth:**

**Vocational Training in Computers for Youth:**

On Aug.29, 2009, we have launched a two months Full Time Computer training programme in collaboration with Vedanta foundation, a non- Profit venture of the Vedanta group of companies, a London based MNC. The aim is to train youth who have studied at least up to class 10 in Basic Computer Applications, MS Office besides Tally or DTP. We have extended its support by generating public response, publicity and student enrolment, besides providing space and administration. Vedanta Foundation provided five Computers, the Course-ware and the salary of the instructors. A nominal fee Rs.250 pm is collected from the students. Forty students from the villages around Thamaraipakkam have joined the Course.

**Banana Fiber Products Making**

A 10 day training programme on Banana Fiber products arranged by us showed the way to convert

the Banana Trunks into a useful product. Twenty women, who underwent the training from 26<sup>th</sup> June to 5<sup>th</sup> July 2009. For this **Eco-Friendly** activity, we have formed a federation to take forward to make & market the banana fiber products under the brand name of 'CORD-CRAFT'. The trainer Smt.Saraswathi Gunasekaran from Villupuram has agreed to help the group with guidance for this activity. Sri.Chokkalingam, Manager of UCO Bank Branch at Thamarapakkam who was the Chief Guest at the Valedictory function of the Course has also agreed to support. A self-help group was formed at the end of the Course and a savings Bank A/c was opened with an initial deposit of Rs.2500/-

### **'VALARMATHI' Adolescent Girls Groups:**

A meeting of 'VALARMATHI' the adolescent girls group was held on 29.5.2009. Dr.Gomathi Sivaji (HOD of Home science & Nutrition Dept, WCC Chennai) spoke on 'The Need for Nutritive Food for Adolescent Girls & Sources of Nutrition in simple daily food items'. Twenty girls participated the interactive session.

There are two groups one is at Perumal Kovil Street and another one at Nadu Kandigai, in Thamarapakkam Panchayath. They meet every month on the fifteenth and discuss the relevant issues like Health and hygiene. Also it is proposed to have a monthly lucky draw with an individual contribution of Rs.5 per head to the kitty.

### **Youth Clubs:**

We have formed 3 youth groups in Thamarapakkam & Magral Village. On January 2010, we are in the process of getting them registered with Nehru Yuva Kendra. 30 Youth members from Magral and Thamarapakkam Villages got free Driving licenses with the help of Nehru Yuva Kendra.

4 of our youth members got skill development training from Nehru Yuva Kendra in Triuverkadu.

### **Visit of CHYK Volunteers from Chinmaya Mission, Los Angels, CA, USA:**

Six CHYK volunteers from Chinmaya Mission, LA USA visited us from 21<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009. This group included two boys and two girls and two lady Balvihar Sevikas. They interacted with our volunteers and shared their experiences. They visited our Tuition Centres and SHGs.

### **Chinmaya Tuition Centres in Villages:**

With the reopening of schools, the Chinmaya Tuition Centres have started again. New Centres were started in THREE hamlets: Telugu Colony (25 students) Nadu Kandigai (50 Students) both in Thamarapakkam Panchayath and Vettaikaran Colony (35 Students) in Magral Village Panchayath.

Totally there are 350 students in all the 12 Centres put together. There are 16 Volunteers who serve as teachers in these Centres. We pay monthly honorarium of Rs.500 to 4 Senior Teachers & Rs.400 each to the rest. Most of the students offer a Voluntary Participatory Contribution of Rs.10/- per month.

School Bags (back-packs) donated by the Masonic Lodge & Hotel Green Park Chennai were distributed to all the students attending the tuition Centres.

It is planned to take the Volunteer teachers on an exposure visit to one of the week-end classes being run by 'DEEPAM', a young group of Professionals for the students from Chennai slums in different locations like Olcott Kuppam, Urrur Kuppam, and Kakkan Colony etc in Besant Nagar Chennai. This trip which was planned earlier for August 2009 is now been postponed to July 2010 after the summer Vacation.

### **'Kodayil Vasantham': A Cool camp for Children**

For the third year in succession, 'Kodayil Vasantham' (Spring in Summer) -the cool camp

in Tamil was organised by us at Thamaraiykkam from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The Camp held between 10 Am to 6 PM was attended by 270 students (IV Std. to IX Std.) including (three Tribal 'Nari Kurava' kids) from seven hamlets around Thamaraiykkam. The majority of them were students of CORD's Tuition Centres.

The highlights of this year's Camp were:

- ❖ **Medical Check up** – Dental, Eye & General check up conducted on the second day. Six Children were given free spectacles.
- ❖ **'Gayathri Homam'** was performed by the campers in six haven kunds under the guidance of Yuva Veers on from 6 am on Sunday the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2008.
- ❖ **'Mathru & Pithru Pooja'** was conducted during the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2009 in which 150 mothers joined.
- ❖ **Celebration of Festivals - 'Pongal' & 'Krishna Jayanthi'**

The Theme of the Camp was **'The Glory of Lord Krishna'**. The campers were divided into five groups for attending the classes /activities. the groups were named: 'Dwaraka', 'Gokulam', 'Brindavan', 'Govardana Giri' and 'Kuruksheetra'. Br.Sadasiva Chaitanya, Acharya of Sarveswara Dhyana Nilayam, Thamaraiykkam conducted classes on chanting of 'Madhurashtakam'. 'The Stories of Lord Krishna' in Tamil published by Gait Press was given in the camp Kit along with back issues of 'Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam'.

Chinmaya Mission's Yuva Veers Sarva Sri P.G.Ganesan, B.Santosh Kumar, S.Vijaya Kumar, Mohan Raj, Prabhakaran and G.Vijaya Kumar and Sri.L.Loganathan of CORD served as resource persons for the sessions besides organizational work. Sri.Gajendran, Ms.Lalitha & Ms.Saraswathy of CORD and about fifty boys and girls of CHYKS- Sarveswara from Thamaraiykkam and near by villages worked dedicatedly for the success of the Camp.

**'Parampara'**, an organisation promoting Indian spiritual/cultural heritage in Chennai supported the camp as a co-sponsor.

**For the fourth year (2010) in succession, 'Kodayil Vasantham' (spring in summer) -the cool camp in Tamil is being planned by us at Thamaraiykkam from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> may 2010 and the theme would be "VAZHVIL VEERAM, VEGAM,VIVEKAM-HANUMAN KATTIYA VAZHIIYL".**

### **Free Computer Classes on Sundays forenoons:**

The Computer Classes in Thamaraiykkam Centre were reopened on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2009 after the summer break. The Group of young Volunteers from '**BHUMI**' Mr.Arun, Ms.Karthika and Ms.Bowya from Thiruvallur conduct the Computer classes attended by about 30 kids.

## **INITIATIVES TOWARDS PUBLIC HYGINE, HEALTH & PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **Green Thamaraiykkam Project**

In October 2009, we launched the Project Green Thamaraiykkam, a community plantation scheme, to give saplings of fruits bearing trees to each of the 700 & odd families in the 17 Hamlets in Thamaraiykkam Panchayath.

The good response to our earlier initiative called '**Chinmaya Vanotsav**', to give saplings to the Community encouraged us to launch this Project. After the Funding by Concern India Foundation, Mumbai the **Project Green Thamaraiykkam** gathered momentum.

The project envisages encouraging each family to adopt three fruit bearing trees, protect and nurture them. During the three years of the Project it is targeted to plant 2000 saplings with participation of families. So far 990 Saplings have been planted by 525 families in Thamaraiakkam:

Mango 250, Guava 200, Gooseberry 215, Lime 250, Jamun 125 Total 990 To generate awareness about the benefits of the Scheme, Street Plays by our Volunteers under the banner of 'Chinmaya Folk Arts Group' would be held in all the Hamlets. Sri.M.Sundar of National Folk Arts Group (NSFG) Chennai has agreed to train our Volunteers for this activity. Street plays were held on October 2009 in 6 villages to propagate the importance of greenery and awareness on Global Warming by CORD's Staff & Volunteers.



**Planting a New Kumizh Teak Tree in Our Ashram**

### **TOTAL SANITATION PROJECT (TSC)**

The work on promoting building of Domestic Toilets is continuing. During the half year, FORTY families in Thamaraiakkam Panchayath built, ( 25) in Sembedu Panchayath and (25) in Thamaraiakkam Panchayath house-hold toilets with our guidance and we helped them to the Government subsidy from BDO's Office.

### **ECO FRIENDLY SMOKELESS STOVES**

The eco-friendly Smokeless Stoves using wooden twigs is getting very popular with the Women of Thamaraiakkam. Due to non-availability of stoves, we were able to help only 6 more families to acquire the stoves during the half year though there is demand for more.

## **FARMERS CLUB:**

Six farmers and Two CORD Team were taken to Elledu village on 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> Nov 2009 an exposure visit on Vermi Compost, Organic farming, SRI & other Eco- Friendly trends in agriculture, being organized there under the guidance of National Agro Foundation an NGO started by late Bharat Rathna C.Subramaniam, a former Mister for Food and Agriculture, Govt.of India.

There are two farmers clubs in Thamaraiakkam Panjayath. These two farmers club are Registered in NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development). On March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010 we inaugurated these two groups in our Chinmaya Hall. Sri.Suresh Kumar, Manager from NABARD's Regional Office, Chennai. A=Sri Chockalingam, Regional Manager, UCO Bank Chennai and Sri Chockalingam, Branch Manager, UCO Bank, Velliyur participated.

### **Inauguration of New Farmers Club**

National Agro Foundation (NAF) continues to help us in introducing improved farming techniques. Like Women's SHGs the farmers also save regularly and deposit the savings into their Bank accounts.



### **Samaj Sevak Course in CORD Thamaraiykkam**

'CHINMAYA SAMAJ SEVAK COURSE' a brain child of Pujya Guruji a Six months Training course in Tamil was inaugurated on 22.2.2010 by Pujya Guruji .There are 9 Students (6 boys & 3 girls) attending the free 6 month residential course on Rural development. Till 20.2.2010, the Students have completed a 'Base-line Survey' of Thamaraiykkam which is the focus Panchayath. All demographic data including level of education, Lively Hood, Health/Sanitation, Economic Status, sources of income etc covering about 900 families has been completed. . Dr.Kshama Metre (CORD's National director) & Sri.Narender from CORD Sidhbari handled the introductory classes and explained the Rules Governing the Course besides the outline of Course contents.

Ms.Seema & Sri Omkar, Development workers are currently handling classes on SHGs, Magalir Mandram, & other Community Based Organizations.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, three of our Staff, Nine Samaj Sevak Students and Four SHG Members went to Pammal Village to attend a Demonstration-cum-training on Vermi Compost and conversion domestic wastes into useful products at the Residence of Sri.Indrakumar, President of Home Exnora at Pammal Village (Near Pallavaram). The innovative practices developed and implemented by Sri Indrakumar would be introduced in our Villages also.



**Base line Survey with Villagers**



**Exposure visit for Vermi compost in Pammal**

**Stage-1**



**Stage - 2**



**Stage - 3**



One of our Beneficiary Smt.Thillothana .She is preparing Vermi Compost in her home shed.

### **Future Plans:**

- Planning to start Embroidery Training and Classes on Computer basics & Tally (six month Course) in our CORD Center in collaboration with Sri Ram Community Polytechnic College Perumalpattu.
- Planning to start Skill Development Training for women in collaboration with Sevalaya at Pakkam and Sri Ram Community Polytechnic College Perumalpattu.
- Planning to setup a Bio-gas unit in Thamaraipakkam Village.
- Planning to conduct awareness on global warming for the Kids by distributing 250 samplings.
- Planning to launch a Nursery by our Farmers Clubs.

Planning to start Village Resource Centers in Collaboration with MS Swaminathan Research Foundation & Sri Ram Community Polytechnic Perumalpattu.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

We offer our grateful Pranams at the Holy Feet of our Pujya Gurudev for his eternal guidance and support. We are grateful to Pujya Guruji and Swami Mitranandaji for their constant guidance and support.

We sincerely thank Dr.Kshama Metre,our National Director, Ms.Mona Malkani of CORD HO, Sri.O.V.Nambiar and all the Trustees and Office-bearers of MCST and Chennai Chinmaya Mission for their valuable support all through for our Project.

HARI OM!

***P.N.Kannan, Director,***

***CORD@ Thamaraipakkam.***

