



HAND IN HAND TAMIL NADU



Report for Smedbo November 2008 – January 2009

The programme implements activities that fall under Hand in Hand's five focus areas, namely Child Labour Elimination Programme, Microfinance/Women's Empowerment Programme, Citizens' Centres, Health and Environment. I am pleased to present the 3-month update for the village supported by your donation, Vengudi, located in Kancheepuram District, Tamil Nadu.

Village Details

The total population of the village is 920 people, with 490 men, 322 women, 63 boys and 45 girls. 63% of the adult male population is literate, and 46% of the adult female population is literate. The village has 230 families.

Populations Details

Gender	Adults	Children	Total
Male	490	63	553
Female	322	45	367
Total	812	108	920

Of the 230 households, only 7% currently have household toilet facilities. There is one middle school and one anganwadi, free government-run daycare centre, functioning in the village. In terms of livelihood, the main source of income is through agriculture, with 173 families are involved in agriculture with 57 engaged in other activities.

About Kancheepuram District

Kancheepuram District is situated on the northern coast of Tamil Nadu and is adjacent to the Bay of Bengal and Chennai city. It is bounded in the west by Vellore and Thiruvannamalai districts, in the north by Thiruvallur district and Chennai district, in the south by Villuppuram district, and in the east by the Bay of Bengal. The district has a total geographical area of 4,43,210 hectares and coastline of 57 kilometers.

Kancheepuram, the temple town, is the district headquarters. It is famous for being the city of a thousand temples with its history as the capital of the Pallavas, the Cholas and the Rayas of Vijayanagar empires, making it a place of great historical significance and a major pilgrimage centre.

It is also famous for its renowned Kancheepuram silk saris that were originally weaved for the temple gods. Today, Kancheepuram silk saris are highly coveted saris that are worn for traditional events, such as weddings or religious occasions. The high demand of the saris has led many weaver families to enlist their children to work in the industry to supplement the family income rather than attend school. Therefore, Hand in Hand launched in Kancheepuram with the original aim of elimination child labour.



Implementation Strategy and Orientation Activities

The following activities have occurred from October to December 2008.

Stakeholders Meeting

Hand in Hand believes that there is a need to build the capacity of the community to understand priorities and articulate its needs to the local government for eradicating poverty. In order to improve community participation and ownership of the project, an orientation was given to Self Help Group members about the goals and expected outcomes of the Village Upliftment Programme.

MOU Signing

A Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the Panchayat President, elected leader of the village, and the Self Help Group members promoted by Hand in Hand to begin implementing the Village Upliftment Programme. The signing of the MOU symbolizes a commitment by both the local body and Hand in Hand to try and work together to ensure to eradicate poverty and appropriately address the voices of the community at the local and Panchayat level.

Formation of Village Development Committee

To implement the programme more effectively Hand in Hand focusing on strengthening grassroots democracy and increase community ownership by setting up community volunteer groups called Village Development Committee for sustainable development. Hand in Hand believes that by involving the community right from planning stage only then the desired outcomes will be achieved. Hence, Hand in Hand collaborates with the community and the Panchayat administration as key stakeholders.

Needs Assessment Study

At the community level, Hand in Hand uses needs assessments to identify the existing welfare services, problems and issues to implement the Village Upliftment Programme more effectively. Keeping the above view, a special process called needs assessment study was done by using the technique of Participant Rural Appraisal (PRA). Through this exercise Hand in Hand is also able to find the gaps in implementing the programme and resources needed to build the community.

Staff Training

To monitor the activity one field staff was appointed in the village and appropriate Hand in Hand staff members were trained.