



## A small step...

“A small step towards informing but a giant leap towards knowing” that is what Kalangarai Vilakkam (the light house) has been. Started in November 2005, it has completed 12 issues. The issues it has thrown up for discussion and the responses received from its valued readers stand testimony to the popularity it enjoys. Though not widely circulated, Kalangarai Vilakkam reaches all those who are here to contribute to the tsunami rehabilitation efforts in Nagapattinam.

The monthly newsletter has been able to highlight issues that required attention of stakeholders, thus being able to sustain the interests of readers on the happenings in Nagapattinam. It has dealt with a range of issues across different domains like sustaining livelihoods, progress of construction, status of orphans and single parents, problems plaguing construction, protecting children, issues in temporary shelters, allaying farmers concerns thus throwing light on almost all issues related to the rehabilitation in Nagapattinam.

Kalangarai Vilakkam has always taken a stand that could contribute to the long term development of the district, not only limiting itself to issues in the affected areas but also on issues of common interests. Nonetheless the quality and sustainability of rehabilitation and development efforts and community issues in the affected area have been the focus. The 4<sup>th</sup> issue of the newsletter stated “...Let our motto be ‘and to harm none....’ Let us be more pragmatic in our approach. Let us take some time to understand the long-term implications of whatever we are going to embark on... and start only if we are fully confident that the ripple effects of this action will not turn into another Tsunami.

We feel proud of the team that made this happen and are ever grateful to our esteemed readers whose responses have been a source of inspiration to move forward. As another one of our previous issues states “Let us move on with a greater determination, audacity and enthusiasm....” ■



## Inside this issue

A small step .....	1
Ensuring quality building .....	2
Protecting our children .....	3
Celebrating children's day .....	4
NGO Profile - Rural Organisation for Social Empowerment .....	6
Events roundup - November .....	7

## Ensuring quality building

Large-scale shelter reconstruction is never easy. This is more so in the case of Nagapattinam district, where vast tracts of low-lying areas lead to problems of drainage and sanitation. Till now we have been concentrating on houses. We now need to shift our priorities to habitation, to ensure that the sites we build are not only safe for the houses within but also safe for the general lay of the land. Apart from this, we are also grappling with a work-force that keeps changing, and often not comprehending the need or technical requirements of a disaster-proof construction. Frequently we have been talking of a need for on-site handholding support that will ensure that these requirements are complied with.

The District Administration, in the month of October 2006 has set up a mechanism that will ensure expert support to all the NGOs in construction activities. The formalities of the group are as follows:

A highly expert Shelter Advisory Group (SAG) at the District Level which can be led by an acknowledged expert like Prof. Santhakumar, emeritus of IIT Chennai and Advisor to the State for Tsunami reconstruction. This group will consist of experts in water and sanitation, drainage, habitation planning as well as the District Officials involved in Tsunami reconstruction.

A Shelter Support Group (SSG), made up of a planner, an architect, a watsan specialist and a civil engineer, which can visit the field periodically and provide hand- holding support to the field level implementers has also been set up. The SAG has the responsibility of assisting the administration in identifying and sourcing credible institutions/ individuals for periodic third party quality assessments. They will also assist the administration in conducting these periodic audits.

Operational modalities are as follows:

- The SAG meets once in a month for 2- 3 days. Based on field observations, assessment reports of the SSG and the monitoring teams of the Administration they hold a clinic with all the NGOs working in construction, to advise

and assist in construction and planning. They advise the administration on the capacity building needs identified and suggest potential technical resources available for the same. They also appraise the district administration on emerging issues, solutions and recommend a plan of action.

- The SSG does field based work in Nagapattinam for 12 days or alternatively covers one third of the construction sites in one visit, so as to ensure that all sites are visited at least once in 3 months. These visits are scheduled in keeping with the monthly clinics so as to provide meaningful inputs into these clinics. Whenever possible, the team attends the shelter review meeting called by the district administration for addressing emerging issues on a broader platform.



*Shelter Advisory Group*

- SSG presents a report with recommended action plan to the Shelter Advisory Group for necessary follow-up action. Care is taken to interface with the Monitoring Teams set up by the administration on a regular basis.
- Trainings/ Capacity building are built into the SSG days of visit, provided there is no compromise on the sites to be visited. As it may not be possible to devote a lot of time for capacity building by the team, they can also source other experts acceptable to Shelter Advisory Group for the conduct of these trainings.

The Shelter support group visited various sites from 13-15th October; 01-8th November and 15th November and submitted their recommendations to the SAG. The advisory group has met thrice following the SSGs visits and based on the recommendations by the SSG listed out the minimum requirements for all the construction sites; and the responsibilities of stakeholders involved in the construction process – the engineers in the site, United Nations Volunteers, government engineers, NCRC. It was also decided to hold one to one discussions with the NGOs who would require expert advice and help. ■

## Protecting our children

One of groups tragically affected by the tsunami has been children - about six hundred children in Nagapattinam who have lost one or both parents. Although the state government developed frameworks and policies to ensure a secure future, in the course of the hustle and bustle of the elders reclaiming their livelihoods and shelters, we have not been able to actually ascertain if these children are faring well.

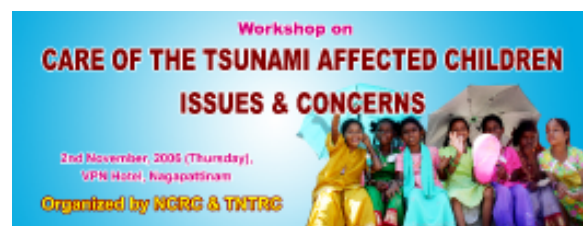
The government took a good decision to run institutional support for the first six months, ensuring that the children were under the protection of the state. However, that embargo is no longer in place and some of the children have been moved out to institutions run by other agencies. Even in the case of the children living with the closest relatives, there is no mechanism to ensure that the quality of their lives is at least as good as the pre-tsunami conditions.

NCRC, with SNEHA, conducted an exploratory study on the conditions of the institutions as well as the status of the children living with the community. This study raised some issues of concern emerging which needed a closer study and a deeper understanding of the situation. The emerging issues can be categorized under:

1. Children living in the Community
  - a. Psychological
  - b. Financial
  - c. Social
  - d. Educational
2. Children living in Institutions
  - a. Standard of services in the Institutions
  - b. Facilities available

While "Child Protection Committees", "Village Watchdog Groups" etc. have been set up, these have not been able or capacitated enough to recognize all emerging issues. The Juvenile Justice Act, in its new form is supposed to cover all these aspects.

All organisations working with children agree that it is time we all got together to take a fresh look at the regulatory mechanisms in place and ensure that these are activated and capacitated to do what they were meant to – namely to ensure a good future for children whose lives were devastated by the loss of parents.



As a first step at addressing children's concerns, NCRC facilitated a one-day workshop on "**Care of the Tsunami Affected Children- Issues and Concerns**" on the **2<sup>nd</sup> of November 06**.

It brought together the NGOs, the community, experts on child related issues, and the District Administration to jointly assess the emerging requirements at the field level and evolve a common action plan to safeguard the interests of these children.

Ms. Girija Kumarababu Consultant UNCRC (United Nations Child Rights Convention); Dr. Nalini Keshavaraj – TNTRC (Tamil Nadu Tsunami Resource Centre); Ms. Dhanam – SNEHA (Social Needs Education and Human Awareness); and Ms. Annie George – NCRC, were resource persons.

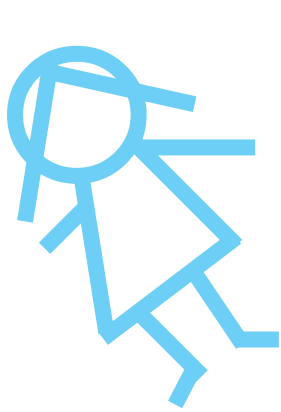
The topics discussed included Child Participation, and Juvenile Justice Act. Mr. Jerald (NCRC) presented the study done on children in care centres and Ms. Dhanam of SNEHA presented the study undertaken on orphans and single parent children living in the community. The participants were split in to four groups: the groups discussed on the changes or additions they would like to have in the following guidelines:

- Guidelines for the home for the children
- Guidelines for the children in living in the community

The guidelines will be widely circulated to the experts before submitting it to the district administration for approval. Ways and means to implementing and monitoring these guidelines will be discussed in detail by the core group of NGOs in forthcoming meetings. ■

## *Celebrating Children's Day*

Children's day celebration in 2005 was jointly conducted by NCRC and NGOs working with children in Nagapattinam. Around 4500 children from the affected areas participated in that event. Following the event a suggestion was received on organizing programmes at taluk levels and enabling more children to participate. Accordingly, this year the core group of NGOs decided to organize the programmes at taluk levels.



### *At Nagapattinam..*

...the NGOs celebrated children's day on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2006 in Puthur in a Kalyanamandapam. Around 850 children in the 10-18 age group participated in the event. The programme was inaugurated by the Sub Inspector of the local area and the sports event was inaugurated by Ms. Annie George, Chief Executive Officer of NCRC. Apart from sports and games, various issues related to children like child rights, child protection were also discussed. The event focused on celebration and participation. Competitions like musical chair, bursting the balloons, singing etc was organised. All the children were given a pen as a token of appreciation. Post lunch, each NGO was given 5 minutes time to do some cultural programmes.

Avvai Village Welfare Society, SNEHA (Social Need Education and Human Awareness), REAL (Rural Education and Action for Liberation) Plan, Vanavil trust, TMSSS (Tanjore Multipurpose Social Service Society), Phoenix Federation, SOS village along with NCRC organised the event.



### *At Sirkali...*

...a workshop on child rights was organised on the 20<sup>th</sup> November. Around 100 children and community members participated in this event. Daniel of SAVE the Children spoke on the child rights and on the Juvenile Justice Act; Mr. Jerald of NCRC spoke on the role of NGOs in preventing of children involving in labor. The participants were split into groups to discuss issues concerning child labor and other issues related to children. Children who were involved in labour earlier were also present. A press conference was organised after the event and the children interacted with reporters and explained the problems that they face in different situations.



*At Vedaranyam...*

...on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2006 children's day celebrations were held. Around 1000 children participated. Sports and games, discussions on children issues were part of the event. All the children who participated in the function received note books from the organizers. Cultural programmes by the children in the evening was filled with fun and joy.

The other NGOs like PDA (People's Development Association), Every Child and DMI (Daughters of Mary Immaculate) also organised children's day at local levels.



## NGO Profile - Rural Organisation for Social Empowerment

Rural Organization for Social Empowerment (ROSE) is a registered organization, which works with the people through economic intervention. ROSE has been working in Nagapattinam and Thiruthuraiipoondi districts for the last 6 years. They work with traditional fishermen who are marginalized for centuries and the dalit communities who are again vulnerable.

### SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT

ROSE believes that Micro Credit is a simple but powerful tool that to rebuild the lives. Mr. Murugananth, the Managing Director says "Micro credit drapes the underprivileged with dignity, grace and respect by making people the asset. By empowering the community and throwing open the doors to micro enterprise, alternative livelihood has paved the way for emergence of a parallel economy and the day is not far off when each and everyone could boast of food clothing, shelter and enterprise".

#### Brick Making Unit

Daily work is being provided to the women in Tsunami affected villages through implementation of this project. It provides workers



with an average of Rs 50 per day. The unit is located at Kameswaram, Nagapattinam District. So far 80,000 bricks have been produced. The unit run by one SHG group consisting of 10 members.

#### Distribution of cattle



Goats have been distributed in Kameshwaram and Prathabaramapuram villages. Each SHG (woman) member was provided 2 goats;

around 32 SHG members were benefited. Cows were distributed to the poor, isolated Tsunami affected

areas of Kameshwaram and Prathabaramapuram villages. 60 women were benefited from the project.

#### Tailoring and Embroidery Training

ROSE has started two tailoring and embroidering institute in Nagapattinam and Thiruvarur districts in 2005. One in Kameshwaram and another in Thiruthuraiipoondi have been imparting training to more than 160 students from the respective villages. Other than imparting tailoring training, basic knowledge on setting up professional tailoring shop, running a business from home is also taught.

#### Educational project

ROSE had distributed study materials and uniforms to 520-school/college going students from different affected villages who had limited access to education. A *Scholarship Scheme* was also launched to prevent the students from discontinuing education. So far Rose has provided scholarship for 72 students. Computer Education Programme is also provided for students hailing from the Tsunami affected villages.

#### SHELTER AND PROVISION FOR ELDERERS

Through its scheme of supporting elders and destitute, last year, ROSE constructed 7 make shift shelter to elders and provided monthly groceries for them. They have also provided minimum Kitchen vessels and medicines.

#### WAY AHEAD

Future plans at ROSE include imparting value based education for all; Voluntary Counseling and Treatment Centre for HIV, STD and AIDS; Old age home; Supplementary education center; Home for orphans; Developing model villages through People's Participatory Planning

For further details contact

**Mr. Muruganantham**

**Managing Director - ROSE TRUST**

P 43, Sugathiram Complex, Sivan Koil Street,  
Veilankanni 611111. Nagapattinam

E-mail: [rose.org@rediffmail.com](mailto:rose.org@rediffmail.com),

Phone: 04365 264144

## Events Roundup - November

### **Agriculture Review Meeting**

**3 November 2006**

A meeting to review activities and practices of NGOs working in agriculture in Nagapattinam was organized by NCRC. REAL, Phoenix Federation, PREPARE, BWDC, World Vision, CREATE; CEE, Venture, RIM and Kudumbam participated in this meeting. They discussed on the capacity building for NGOs and implementation of packages related to the second year like the crop management and integrated farming system and on crop insurance.

### **Planning meeting for NGOs working with children for Children's Day celebration**

**6-7 November 2006**

The NGOs working with children in Nagai taluk met at child line office on 6th November to plan for the Children's day celebration. It was planned to have the celebration on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2006, around 1000 children will be participating. The children will be put in three groups with respect to their age: 10–12yrs; 13–15 yrs; and 16–18yrs. Each group will be having games to play and it will be only a day of enjoyment and not competition. Evening there will be cultural programmes by children. The programme is at Puthur in a Mandapam; around 20 NGOs will participate in this and bring their children.

The NGOs working with Children in Vedaranyam held a planning meeting on the 7th November in CREATE. Around 30 NGOs participated in this planning meeting and they will organise Children's day celebration on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2006. They expect around 1500 children. The celebration will have games and cultural programme.

### **Meeting with TPIU officials on Community Infra Structure**

**8 November 2006**

Mr.Swaminathan, Joint Director - Tsunami Project Implementation Unit (TPIU) held a discussion to discuss about the common infrastructure constructed through the Asian Development Bank in reference to the fisher folks. It was learnt that six

crore has been allotted from ADB for training and building infrastructure. The infrastructure requirements were discussed and suggestions like having an auction hall, fish drying platform, cold storage unit, etc. were made. The Project Officer, DRDA, officials from the District Implementation Unit, World Vision, TMSSS along with NCRC attended the meeting.

### **Shelter construction review meetings**

**3,10, 17 & 24 November 2006**

Review meetings to take stock of construction of permanent shelters in the district were held at the mini Conference Hall, Collectorate. The meetings stressed on constructing quality houses that guarantee minimum of 10 years. The NGOs were also asked to insure the permanent shelters in the name of the beneficiaries. The NGOs who are yet to start the work were urged to start at least the earth work before the on set of the monsoon.

### **Children's Core group meeting**

**11 November 2006**

The monthly meeting of the core group for children was held at Nagapattinam Collectorate. The participants discussed various issues and events related to children which included Juvenile Justice Act, Children's day celebration, feed back of the workshop on Care of the Tsunami Affected Children-Issues and Concerns. The group also planned to collect the details of orphans and semi orphans who live in the community. The meeting was attended by representatives from six NGOs and four children.

### **Mapping of Water Bodies**

**7, 14 & 28 of November 2006**

The Agriculture Sector of the NCRC had its Review meeting on the study 'mapping of water bodies' in NCRC, Nagapattinam. The five NGOs who are taking part in the study had come to review and present their data they collected. They also had discussions on the formats the limitation in data collection. TOFARM, VENTURE, CEE, CCD, and Kudumbam took part in this meeting.

### **Planning meeting for Agricultural Insurance Workshop**

**14 November 2006**

The Agriculture sector of NCRC had a meeting with the NGOs to plan for the Agricultural Insurance Workshop scheduled on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006. REAL, TOFARM, AVVAI, BWDC, CCD, Kudumbam, TMSSS, Sevalaya and Venture participated the meeting. The participants discussed about the SHGs promoted by the respective NGOs and how many of them would be able to participate in the workshop.

### **Shelter advisory Group meeting**

**15<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

The Shelter Advisory Group met in the Collectorate mini conference hall as a part of the ongoing shelter quality monitoring and decided to hold technical clinics to support the NGOs involved in the process of construction. The group consisted of executive engineer, state electricity board, UN volunteers, Mr.Jignesh member Institute for Habitat Development, Mr. Dipan Shah- Managing Coordinator IHD, Assistant Executive Engineer TWAD, Executive Engineer TDIU, executive engineer – PMU Chennai, Mr. Santhakumar Advisor

UNDP, Mr. Alok Patnaik – Shelter Specialist UNDP, Mr.Prashant Heado Planning Coordinator – Auroville Tsunami Rehabilitation and NCRC representative. The group also held discussions to understand the emerging issues and concerns, roles and responsibilities of the Shelter Advisory Group and Shelter Support Group.

### **Agricultural Insurance Workshop**

**17<sup>th</sup> November 2006,**

The Agriculture sector of NCRC organized a workshop on Agricultural Insurance, for the farmers, NGOs and others. Mr. Suriya Narayanan of Agricultural Insurance Company Ltd explained about the components that are covered under agriculture insurance and the procedures involved in getting the insurance. The Lead Bank Manager, Joint Director Agriculture, Joint Director Horticulture and other Bank Managers also spoke on the occasion. The NGOs CCD and Kudumbam shared there experiences on agricultural Insurance. Panchayat Leaders from 5 taluk's i.e. Vedaranyam, Sirkali, Nagappatinam, Tharangambadi and Kilvelur also shared their learning's and clarified there queries.

Kalangerai Vilakkam is an NCRC publication, developed purely for information purposes. The information contained herein has been collated from various sources and NCRC is not responsible for its accuracy or any actions taken based thereon.

To subscribe to Kalangerai Vilakkam visit [www.ncrc.in](http://www.ncrc.in)

NGO Coordination and Resource Centre, No. 31, South Palpannaichery, Mahalakshmi Nagar, Nagapattinam. Ph: 04365 252618/252681.

NCRC Front Office: No. 313 Collectorate, Nagapatinam, Ph: 04365 252547