NCRC
NGO Co-ordination and Resource Centre
Nagapattinam

Kalangarai Vilakkam

The NCRC newsletter
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Protecting children

One of the tragic aftermaths of the tsunami has been the drastically changed lives of about six hundred children of Nagapattinam who have lost one or both parents. Although the State Govt. has developed frameworks and policies that will ensure their 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 continue to fare well.

One of the best decisions taken by the government was the administration 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 players. Even in the case of the children living with the closest relatives, there was no mechanism in place to ensure that the quality of their lives was at least as good as the pre-tsunami conditions.

NCRC, with SNEHA, had done an exploratory study on the conditions of the institutions as well as the status of the children living with the community. This study revealed that there were 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
   Psychological, Financial, Social, Educational
2. Children living in Institutions
   Standard of services in the Institutions, 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 the issues that are emerging. The JJ Act, in its new form is supposed to cover all these aspects.

Do you not agree that it is time we all got together to take a fresh look at the plight of these affected children? Granted that our regulatory mechanisms are in place, but is it not time to take a relook at them vis- a- vis the emerging issues and concerns, to ensure that these mechanisms are activated and capacitated enough to do what they was meant to do – *ensure a good future for those of our children, who, not having a parent of their own, are depending on us, as surrogate parents, to protect them, cherish them and compensate them for the terrible tragedy wrought on them by nature.* ■

Study on agricultural infrastructure systems in Nagapattinam

NCRC, with the active support and financial assistance from Concern Worldwide, organised a national level workshop on disaster preparedness in agriculture in the month of August 2006. The workshop focused on two major thematic areas – flood and salinity. Detailed discussions were held during the workshop on 'how to address flood and salinity issues since both are inter-linked to an extent and both occur in the district frequently.

A study was conducted as a precursor to this workshop, which tried to determine, among other aspects of agriculture, the different natural calamities, their probable reasons, the coping mechanisms of the community and recommendations to reduce the vulnerabilities of the farming community to such disasters. One of the oft-stated reasons for the occurrence of frequent flooding and salination was the inefficiency of the drainage and agricultural infrastructure in the district. When asked to suggest actions that need to be taken to help the farmers, most of respondents suggested desilting and clearing the canals, recharging the water bodies, maintaining and upgrading the infrastructure already in place. The findings of the study were validated in the workshop where implementers, researchers and policy makers emphasised on the urgency of improving the irrigation and drainage infrastructure as a means of reducing the district's vulnerability to frequent flooding and salination.

Need for urgency to improve irrigation and drainage infrastructure

However, the drainage and agriculture canals have been constructed more than forty years ago and are no longer recognised as active as per the records available with the departments concerned. Similarly, the water bodies that were the mainstay of the small and marginal farmers have either been covered up or silted heavily due to lack of maintenance. Identifying these canals and water bodies; prioritising the arterial branches that need immediate corrective action; and planning the appropriate course of action are the major tasks that could be done with the active collaboration of the departments concerned, the community and the NGOs.

In this context, NCRC facilitated a series of planning exercise with the department officials, NGOs (TOFARM, CCD, Venture, Kudumbam, and CEE) and representatives from the community. Subsequently towards the end of September 2006 a pilot exercise was carried out covering Vettar and Odamboghi canals in Nagapattinam and a few other small water bodies in North Poiganallur village in Nagapattinam. The results of this pilot exercise will help finalise the tools and plan of action.

Objectives:

- To collectively address the issue of identifying, prioritising and planning a course of action to improve the drainage and irrigation infrastructure, including canals and water bodies that have been nearly defunct, leading to frequent flooding and salination.
- To sensitise the Government / NGOs / INGOs and farmers on the need to maintain these life support systems of agriculture.

Expected outcomes:

- Mapping of the agriculture infrastructure of Nagapattinam, including the water bodies, agriculture and drainage canals, especially, in the tsunami affected areas
- Identifying and classifying them based on the present status and the importance vis-a- vis agricultural requirements
- Plan of action, along with both technical and financial estimates for the rehabilitation of these identified works
- A solid base to advocate with the government / donor organization to fund for irrigation infrastructure improvements.

The Public Works Department, Agriculture Engineering Dept., Agriculture Dept., NGOs, NCRC and Concern Worldwide are partners to the study. ■

Back to the roots - sustenance of farmers through traditional practices

A research and training centre on ecology and organic farming got inaugurated by Tamil Nadu Organic Farmers Movement (TOFARM) in Kadambara Vazhkai village, Aliyur panchayat, Nagapattinam on 24th September 2006. The endeavor under the *Mahanadhi* project of TOFARM is named as *Annam Amudham*, meaning 'Food for Eternity'.

The *Annam Amudham* centre is based on a holistic approach to natural resources and their utilisation in farming, water conservation, forestation, and energy. The centre will be a platform for the farmers to not only understand the traditional wisdom, but to learn from living examples of it. Services provided will include pure line selection of seeds, cattle breeding, seasonal information, and validation. The centre will also involve itself in research and development, and educate and motivate the younger generation.

TOFARM Organic Farm School

The project area covers around 12.5 acres of land, about 5.5 acres of which is used for traditional seed production and for conducting trials. Some of the traditional seed varieties already sown include the Jeeraga Samba, Mappilai Samba, Madu Mulunghe, Samba Moshanam, Pisini, Pichili Samba, Black Jeeraga Samba, Kundali and Ponni that have come to the verge of extinction. ***"There are around 7000 of them that have almost become extinct in whole of Tamil Nadu. Our aim is to trace them out and bring them back to cultivation"***, explains Mr. Arunachalam, a trustee and technical guide. The centre also includes a vegetable and traditional medicinal garden, fodder field exhibiting several varieties, traditional cattle breeds, agro forestry and structures for conducting large-scale trainings, a seed bank, and for the herbal clinic. "There is also a provision for leaving the structure on rent for conference and meetings", explains Mr. Thiruvenkatasamy, co-founder of TOFARM.

Annam Amudham is all set to start trainings for farmers towards the end of October, by charging a nominal fee. The announcement of the trainings would be given shortly through Karaikkal F.M. and other media. ***"A farmer who enters Annam Amudham in the morning, after observing the sustainable practices demonstrated, will return home in the evening as a motivated, confident farmer,"***, tells Ms. Revathi, the founder of TOFARM. The training topics include soil fertility management, integrated farming system, preparation and application of growth promoters, herbal medicinal treatments for livestock, honey bee keeping, herbal plants cultivation and value addition, integrated pest control, water conservation and harvesting techniques, system of rice intensification (SRI), preservation and treatment of seeds, seed collection and conservation, preparing bio compost, vermi compost (9 models exhibited), integrated farming system, conservation of local resources and use of cost-effective, easily-available farm implements.

TOFARM is having extensive plans for the organic school. Once the *Annam Amudham* gets established in Nagapattinam, it would be replicated in the five neighbouring districts and then to the entire state with the support of the 30,000 members enrolled in the movement across Tamil Nadu. As far as the immediate plans are concerned, sustaining the livelihood of at least 25, 000 Delta farmers of Nagapattinam through trainings in Annam Amudham remains the focus.

Speaking at the inauguration of Annam Amudham, Shri. Tenkasi Jawahar, IAS, the District Collector of Nagapattinam informed that an exclusive stall would be opened for vegetables produced in organic way in the Farmers' Bazar of Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai. And that is surely good news for both farmers and the consumers. ■

Buruslin P. Mento

Growing responsibly

Every child excels in something, does well in some areas and not in some others. It is their right that they are given the opportunities to grow in their interests – that gives them self esteem and motivates them. CREATE – Plan (Centre for Rural Energy and Appropriate Technology Extension) has been sharing this thought and has gone a step further in providing 768 children a platform to explore their abilities and excel. CREATE - Plan has been working with children's in 10 tsunami affected villages. They have formed around 26 Children's club, each club having 25-30 members.

'CREATE'ing childrens club

The Club's activities include conducting workshop, mela's, and training. To encourage the leadership quality in a child they also have introduced the concept of Children's Parliament where in the club elects its own Member of Parliament, Prime Minister and other ministers. Each village has a club that has got two elected Members of Parliament. There are totally 52 such MPs who are elected by their respective clubs. There is an election to elect the Prime Minister, cabinet Ministers, along with a speaker. The ministry meets once a month and the parliament once in two months. The cabinet includes Prime Minister, Speaker, Education Minister, Tourism Minister, Culture Minister, Child Development Minister, Water and Sanitation Minister, Agriculture Minister, Health Minister and Sports Minister.

The children club called as Butterfly club deals with child related issues that come up in their respective village. They have a children's mela wherein they organise sports competition and cultural programmes. They further discuss many serious issues like child labour, health awareness etc.

While interacting with the Cabinet, it was evident that children's interests are more on social issues like stopping of child labour, plantation of trees, etc. instead of just having cultural or sports programmes. Prime Minister Jagadeswaran (9th Standard) proudly says "education is power and will back you even in the worst of times" thus he will primarily concentrate in bringing awareness amongst his other friends who don't go to school the importance of education". Speaker Ranjini (10th Standard) quickly recollects how they helped Poonguzhali a 10th standard drop out to realise her dream of studying further. This girl of Vellapallam, a village in Nanguvedhapathy, was forced to leave school as her father was concerned about her safety. When the issue was brought to the cabinet they quickly met the parents of Poonguzhali, explained her dream to them and reassured them of her safety. The cabinet not only helped Poongozhali realise her dreams but also gave her the opportunity to be a teacher in future. When their role in health is discussed Yogeshwaran (9th Standard) shares their experience of creating awareness on Chicken Gunya by '*Villu pattu'* (a traditional song) and street plays through which they have not only educated their friends but also their parents. Minister of education Kayal Vizhi (8th standard) says they will be focusing more on creating awareness on the G.O. 127 and 248 on school fee waiver. However he expressed disappointment at not doing more than just creating awareness as they themselves have not got their reimbursement of fees and are scared of the school dismissing or taking action against them. But despite this he will be actively creating awareness and not stop their work. When asked if being in the post has given social responsibility, he says 'school and friends have given me so much that he doesn't require any other driving force than that of being just a part of his community'.

Children are not only wiser than men, they are socially more concerned and responsible than men, this bunch of smiling children reminds us that they have more to contribute to our nation. ■

Archana Iyer

NGO Profile - CREATE

The Centre for Rural Energy and Appropriate Technology Extension (CREATE) is a Non Governmental Organisation working for the development of the rural masses in Nagapattinam district since 1989.

CREATE's mission is to uplift and empower the rural masses by:

- Using indigenous rural methods and appropriate technologies.
- Making villages self sufficient in their energy needs.
- Providing basic needs, health and education facilities to all.
- Improving the living standards and growth in villages.
- Using integrated methods that will bring prosperity and sustainable development to rural areas in consonance with Providing Urban Amenities to Rural Areas (PURA).
- Inculcating community awareness for understanding conservation of biodiversity, which is essential for human survival.
- Increasing the living conditions of the poor
- Strengthening SHGs

One of the major projects of CREATE is the rain water harvesting system at Seruthalaikkadu village set up in 1999.

Soon after the Tsunami struck, on January 06, 2005, CREATE formed an NGO network called the Tsunami Relief and Rehabilitation Team (T- ReART) comprising Rural Education and Action for Liberation (REAL), Center for Awareness and Rural Education (CARE), Plan International (India). REAL chose to work in the twenty villages in and around Nagapattinam; CARE in the ten villages of Sirkali while CREATE in Vedaraniyam Taluk covering ten villages.

During the relief phase, up to March 31, 2005, CREATE was involved in cleaning camps, health and hygiene camps, provision of potable drinking water, distribution of relief material, distribution of hygienic packs, distribution of medicines, counselling for the depressed, distribution of school kits, construction of 205 temporary shelters for homeless families.

CREATE also undertook extensive surveys using village volunteers to determine the extent of damage in every village caused by the tragedy. A village profile for each village has been compiled and projects after the relief period are implemented as per the profile.

The highly motivated and dedicated team of CREATE comprising of volunteers, community organisers, child organisers, counsellors and health workers have been working continuously to ensure complete rehabilitation of the affected people. Planned and organised projects were implemented by CREATE during the rehabilitation phase.

Working for children's development

CREATE emphasises on children development, as more than one third of the casualties in the tragedy are children. Moreover, children have both expressive and non-expressive needs. It is the latter that require special attention and care which child organisers, health workers and trained counsellors attend to. It was generally observed that parents due to their being preoccupied with shifting to new homes and settling down neglected their children between three to five years of age. This motivated CREATE to open a Children Health and Capacity Development Center (CHCDC), one each in seven villages. The children between three to five years of age are put under the care of teachers. Innovative activities, nutritious diet, growth monitoring, immunisation and regular health checkups are available to the children. Efforts are now being made to have permanents CHCDC's with playgrounds that have all the necessary infrastructure. Mothers of all the children in the CHCDC's have formed a mother's club for effective functioning of these CHCDC's.

School going children have formed a children's club where special teachers nurture children's talents in fancy dress, dance, drawings, essay writing and debates.

CREATE has brought health care to the doorstep of every villager in the area. Regular follow-ups are done for all cases of ante natal, postnatal, sick infants and children. Treatment is provided and all cases are followed up. General and special health camps are held at regular intervals in every village. Screening is regularly carried out for anaemia, filariaisis and presence of other tropical diseases. Villagers are motivated to maintain kitchen garden and to increase their intake of greens in their diet for preventing anaemia. CREATE's health workers also distribute seeds of green vegetables for the kitchen garden. De-worming tablets are distributed at regular intervals to children and adults. Iron and vitamin tablets are given where required. The health workers also help the government staff in distributing Filariasis prevention medicines.

Mental care facilities are available to one and all at their doorstep by the trained counsellors of CREATE. Three barefoot counsellors per village have been selected and a team of thirty counsellors has been given intensive training by the experts of Ganghigram Rural Institute, Ambadurai, Dindigul District.

CREATE has taken up the task of micro level disaster management preparedness for the community. Gandhigram Rural Institute and Family Welfare Trust are helping CREATE in this task

Contact CREATE at:
7/98, Avarani Road, Sikkal, Nagapattinam Dist.
Nagai Road, Vedaraniam, Nagapattinam Dist
email: createspg@yahoo.com ■

Testing the waters

REAL Plan organised two day training programme for children on water testing on the 27th and 28th September 2006 at REAL (Rural Education and Action for Liberation) children resource centre, Kadambadi, Nagapattinam. Around 40 Children of the age group 13 - 18 participated. UNICEF, TWAD (Tamilnadu Water and Drainage) board, the health department representatives and Plan India participated in the inaugural of this two day program. 'Jal Tara – a hand book on water testing', 'A Guide for the construction of affordable and cost effective sanitary latrine', 8 posters drawn by the children during children's Mela amongst other books were released in commemoration of this function.

The first day was mainly to orient on water cycle, contamination, water monitoring and on surveillance. Jal Tara kit was also demonstrated along with 14 other types of water tests. The types of water test include turbidity, Power of Hydrogen (PH), TDS, Hardness test, etc. On the second day the children were taken to Kallar for an exposure visit where in they were given opportunity to take water samples from wells, hand pumps etc.,

Training children in water testing

The children who attended the training programme were from 10 villages of Nagapattinam i.e., Ariyanatu Street, Pattinacheri, Samanthanpettai, Kallar, Kameswaram, Manalmedu, Perumalpettai, Chandrapadi, Prathabaramapuram and Pudhupalli. One water kit, sponsored by UNICEF, each was given to the children from the villages costing Rs.2500 and another water testing kit (higher performance) of value Rs.17000 will be set up in one of the villages. The Children will be handling these kits and further they will be training other children in their villages. REAL Plan aims to cover 120 children through this initiative.

The two day training was sponsored by UNICEF and supported by Plan International. The training was facilitated by Mr.A.Kalimuthu Arumugam – Chair Person WES Net (Water – Environment Sanitation Network) – India Core Group. ■

Weathering temporary shelters

The temporary shelter scenario in Nagapattinam remains bleak with the onset of the northeast monsoons. Shelter conditions and the coping mechanism of people who live in temporary shelter is increasingly becoming a serious concern. In this context NCRC did a rapid appraisal on a few of the shelters in and around Nagapattinam and recorded views of different stakeholders.

Latest data temporary on shelters shows that only 8% of the temporary shelters that are occupied, are in good conditions; the remaining need a certain level of maintenance.

Total number of temporary shelters	Number of temp. shelters in good condition	Number of temp. shelters requiring repair
8243	636	7607

The government's views

While sharing his views the Special Deputy Collector (Relief & Rehabilitation) said "the main objective while putting up temporary shelters was to provide for a transit shelter to those who lost their shelters to Tsunami. However, as the construction of permanent shelters is getting delayed for reasons like material, manpower shortage, fund flow issues, the community is forced to stay in temporary shelters for a longer duration". Since these shelters are meant for a shorter period of time, the materials used in construction, like the wooden planks and red mud plastic have worn out in due course of time. The shelters did not suffer much during the last monsoon as it had been only a year since these were built.

Many other issues on rehabilitation have marooned the issues in temporary shelters. At present the government has sanctioned 1.25 crore for repairing the temporary shelter, 80 per cent of the temporary shelters have already been repaired. The remaining will be repaired in a period of two months. The Special Deputy Collector said that the government is prepared to tackle situations like flood, inundation, and cyclone. The government has also identified places to relocate the affected in case of any eventuality. When asked whether he has been receiving grievances related to temporary shelters, he responded by saying that the affected communities in the shelter are already in a desperate mood having lost their relatives and properties. Thus the only relief they could get is moving to a safer abode. He said government is giving all possible support to NGOs to augment the pace construction so that as many families could be moved to permanent shelters.

Problems plaguing temporary shelters:
- Delay in permanaent shelter constructions making temporary shelters not so "temporary" in nature.
- Depleted conditions since material was meant for temporary use
- Unbale to withstand monsoon onslaught

"The immediate relief we will get is by going to our permanent shelter"
- Renuka, resident of temporary shelter

Community's views

"The immediate relief we will get is by going to our permanent shelter" says Renuka, one of the inhabitants of temporary shelter in Pannagudi. There are around 160 families in Panangudi Temporary shelters who got displaced from Kizhepattinacherry. They have been here since April 2005. Even though last year monsoon they didn't face much problems, on 28th October 2006 around 20 temporary shelters were blown by the strong winds. Knowing that the poles supporting the shelters cannot withstand the wind, the people moved to safer places thus preventing much damage.

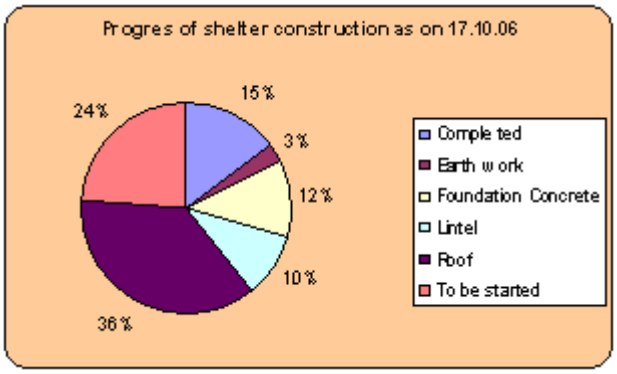
The people recollect that the government officials had come to the site immediately, and in 2 days time the temporary shelters were set up again. The community feels unsafe staying in shelters that were put up to last for only 6-9 months and say the only solution to these problems is to move them to permanent shelters as soon as possible.

NGO's Views

"Disaster in Nagapatinam is more associated with floods and preparedness is more for these disasters". But, recent fire incidents in temporary shelters point to the need for more comprehensive disaster preparedness, comments Mr. Roche – Project Coordinator REAL PLAN (Rural Education and Action for Liberation).

REAL constructed temporary shelters in Kallar and Velankanni. They raised the floor level considering the lowness of the area thus preventing the floors inside the shelters from getting wet. REAL also provided 58 fire extinguishers for the temporary shelters in Kallar and Velankanni. Mr. Roche feels that fire extinguishers should be available across temporary shelter locations.

Status of permanent s helter construction



The progress of shelter construction is not on a level as envisaged. Only 15% of the houses have been completed so far. Given the difficulties plaguing construction permanent shelter construction is very unlikely to be completed by 31st March 2007 – the target set for the task. Does this point to the need to have further discussions among all the stakeholders concerned and setting a realistic target? Meanwhile the government has begun maintenance of temporary shelters. Let us hope that the efforts of the government and NGOs would make the temporary shelters livable for a few more months.

"Government is willing to take up the construction of the houses which has been with drawn by the NGOs" said special deputy collector (Land & Acquisition) while sharing his views on the construction scenario in Nagapattinam. He told that Government has funds available to take up construction of 222 houses through Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (Rajiv Gandhi package for tsunami relief); 1020 houses through Project Officer DRDA BSNL funds (Rs.21.42 crore); 563 houses through Rajiv Gandhi package for tsunami relief. In the context of these funds not having been used it will be used to build shelters for inhabitants of vulnerable houses within 1000 mts of high tide. These families are the ones who are not included in the current beneficiary list.

Houses handed over in the months of September and October 2006

Location	Taluk	No. of houses	NGO
Koozhaiyar	Sirkazhi	58	Church's Auxillary for social action
Madavamedu	Sirkazhi	100	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
Chinnamedu	Tarangambadi	145	Rural Development Trust
Akkarapettai	Nagapattinam	95	Matha Amrithananthamayi Math
Thedeerkuppam	Nagapattinam	69	Matha Amrithananthamayi Math
Railway keelpuram	Nagapattinam	80	Matha Amrithananthamayi Math
Pandagasalai	Nagapattinam	40	Matha Amrithananthamayi Math

Showing the way...

Life often, seems a sweet melody from the peripheral layers of our understanding of our neighbours. But it is when we are confronted with people like Raman of Kalamanallur that we begin to ask basic questions about life like that of the philosophers do.

Kalamanallur, of the Taluk of Tharangambadi lays 3 kms east of Okkur main road. The village comprises 150 Dalit families most of whom are agriculture labourers. Raman's parents Dharmu and Vellaiammal, both daily labourers, had been fetching bread for the entire family consisting of Parimala, 27, Raman, 25 and his twin sister Ramalakshmi. Due to increasing concerns in the family like the marriage of daughters and dearth of labour, Raman took up to working as a labourer in a goods company after completing IX standard. He travelled to various places and toiled tirelessly to earn his family a living. Raman managed to give his sisters in marriage. The family had just started to breath easy…

On an otherwise regular day a year, Raman vomited blood when he returned home. Examination revealed that both his kidneys had stopped functioning. Raman's parents managed to reach him to the Apollo Hospital, Chennai, where the doctors suggested replacement of either of the kidneys. Raman's parents sought economical assistance for the surgery from relatives which went in vain. Dharmu approached the Village Information Centre (VIC) at Akkur for help. Priya and Arumugam, the staff at the centre, took the case to NCRC and they were directed to speak to the NGOs. With instantaneous initiatives from the VIC staff, Raman's parents managed to get Rs.15,000 from Mata Amirtanandamayi Matt and Rs.10,000 from Offerr for the surgery. Other support came from one of Raman's employers and his youngest brother-in-law. Thus Raman got one of his father's kidney transplanted on the day of Diwali 2005 in Stanly Hospital, Chennai.

But this was not the end of the story… After treatment at the hospital for four months, Raman regained his functions and was discharged. Reaching back home, Raman started feeling mentally down, his hands tied in idleness. He saw a world of emptiness that he had never experienced before. Dejected by the situation, Dharmu approached the VIC again and shared the agony of his son. Priya and Arumugam suggested that Raman apply for a petty shop through the MP Fund. Following the suggestion, Dharmu managed to give his son a small shop in the month of April. As they could not invest more on the shop due to economical barriers, Dharmu approached the VIC for help. Considering the case, NCRC provided material worth of Rs.3,000 on 12th August 2006 and assured to assist further if the business goes well.

"If you outsiders had not helped us, it would have been a different story in our home..."
- Vellaiammal, Raman's mother

Raman and his family has once again gained some hope. Out of gratitude, Dharmu keeps visiting the VIC regularly in his bi-cycle. Vellaiammal keeps reiterating, "If you outsiders had not helped us, it would have been a different story in our home…"

Life is not the sweetest of melodies for the unfortunate. But lending a hand in need surely keeps life singing. ■

Events Roundup - September-October

Planning meet on Mapping of Water Bodies
1 September 2006

The Agriculture sector of NCRC organised a Planning meeting to take up the study 'mapping of water bodies' in Nagapattinam. The meeting was held to discuss on the importance to study the coastal water bodies of Nagapattinam, methodology of the study and to evolve an understanding among the NGOs who are willing to take part in the study. Government officials and NGO representatives attended the meeting. Dr. Sivanappan, senior consultant, who had designed the course of study, guided the process.

Preparatory meetings at NCRC for UNDP Stock taking
8 September 2006

Mr. Ananthanarayanan Sharma, UNDP consultant, facilitated a discussion to consolidate the major achievements, constraints, lessons learnt and recommendations on post tsunami rehabilitation efforts. The discussion was held at NCRC. This was a part of the Tsunami Stock taking meeting to be held in Chennai on 22nd and 23rd of September. The meeting, which will be organised by UNDP and TNTRC, will take stock of the achievements, limitation and learning rehabilitation and coordination activities by different civil society organizations during the last 18 months.

Children Core Group meeting
9 September 2006

The Children Core group met to discuss various issues related to children like reimbursing the fees to the children by the schools in the context of reinstating of fee waiver through the Government Order 127 and 248; collect feed back on the posters put up at different locations by NCRC to ensure wider dissemination and awareness on the GO127 & 248. The core group of NGOs and the children representing different schools attended the meeting. The Children, while actively participating, assured that they will discuss the issues relating to GO 127 and 248 in their Children Club for sensitising more students on this. The meeting was held at the Front Office, Collectorate.

Agriculture Crop Insurance Seminar
12 September 2006

NCRC organised a seminar on "Agriculture Crop Insurance" in Sea Horse hotel, Nagapatinam. The seminar was organised mainly to understand the various facts of Agriculture Crop insurance and its benefits. Mr.Anbarasu Regional Manager, Agriculture Insurance Company, Chennai had presented a paper explaining the Insurance benefits and procedures. The Manager Kumbakonam Centre Cooperative Bank (KCCB) and Joint Director Agriculture, District Administration Nagapatinam presided over the seminar. NGOs like CCD, CCE, Kudumbam, Tofarm participated in this seminar.

Third party quality audit
12 to 14 September 2006

The quality audit team facilitated by NCRC consisting of Mr.Deepan Shah - UNDP consultant and Mr.Jignesh – UNDP consultants, visited sites like Poompuhar, Sathangudi, Manikapangu, Chinamanikapangu, and Tharangambadi from. Later in a meeting held at NCRC represented by Mr.Alok Patnaik of UNDP it was decided to take further steps for shelter advisory group meeting and operationalising a technical clinic to help NGOs, engineers, masons, etc.

Shelter construction review meetings
1 and 15 September

Review meetings to take stock of construction of permanent shelters in the district were held at the Main Conference Hall, Collectorate. The meetings stressed on constructing quality houses that guarantee minimum of 10 years. A call to identify and mainstream the NGOs that construct permanent houses without signing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the district administration was also given. The NGOs were all urged to build the foundation of the houses before the monsoon.

Children Rally cum meeting
16 September 2006

300 children of Sirkali Block took a rally from Sirkali bus stand to the Shanthi Kalyana Manadapam.The rally was flagged of by Ms. Annie George C.E.O, NCRC. The children shouted various slogans related to Child rights. Walking 1 km the children reached the venue, where they had performed a street play depicting the rights of children. The children read out

their manifesto highlighting various issues. They will be meeting the MLA in their residence and submitting their manifesto.

Mapping of coastal water bodies follow- up meeting
16 September 2006

The follow up meeting on "Mapping of coastal water bodies" was held in 313, Collectorate, Nagapattinam.The meeting aimed at extensive planning of the study on water bodies in the coastal Nagapattinam and to discuss on roles and timeframe for the stakeholders involved in the study. NGOs including VENTURE, Tofam, Kudumbam, CREATE, etc.attended the meeting.

Meeting on "Mapping of Water Bodies"
22 September 2006

The Agriculture Sector of NCRC had organised a meeting on Mapping of Water Bodies in 313, Collectorate, Nagapatinam. The meeting was to orient the partner NGOs on the data collection and methodology to be adopted in the study. Assistant Engineer, Thiruvarur explained the feasibility of the study in the five taluks, i.e. Sirkali, Tharangambadi, Kilvelur, Vedaranyam, and Nagapattinam. NGOs like CEE, CCD, Venture, Tofam, Kudumbam, and Ekta Parishad had attended the meeting.

Stock taking meeting – Children related activities
22 and 23 September, 2006

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Tamil Nadu Tsunami Resource Centre jointly organised a planning meeting in Chennai on the 6th of September 2006 ahead of the stock taking meeting in Chennai. Stock taking meeting is being planned by the Government of Tamil Nadu to take stock of the achievements and shortfalls in rehabilitation activities undertaken by different stakeholders post tsunami. The meeting focused on child related activities. Around 30 participants representing various organisations like UNICEF, Kanyakumari Resource Centre, etc working for children in the state attended this meeting. NCRC also represented in the meeting.

Planning meeting on drafting guidelines for Children living in the community
26 September 2006

The Children Core Group met in 313, Collectorate, Nagapatinam to plan for drafting the guidelines for the affected children who are living the community. The core group members discussed on the different issues faced by the children in the community and suggested measures to tackle these. The recommendations of the core group members will be considered while drafting the guidelines. Five representatives of the Children Core Group had participated in this meeting.

Shelter Review Meeting
22 and 29 September 2006

Review meetings to take stock of construction of permanent shelters in the district were held at the Main Conference Hall, Collectorate on 22nd and 29th of September 2006. While reviewing the progress of construction, the Special Deputy Collector (Land Acquisition) Mr. Shanmuga Sundaram stated that the houses should be insured for a minimum period of 10 years in the name of beneficiaries by the NGOs.

Agriculture Review Meeting
7 October 2006

A meeting to review activities and practices of NGOs working in agriculture in Nagapattinam was organized by NCRC on 7th October. As many as 10 NGOs participated in the meeting. The meeting also saw discussion on capacity building for NGOs and implementation of packages related to the second year like the crop management and integrated farming system. A format seeking activities of NGOs was distributed to all the NGOs.

Shelter Advisory Group
9 October 2006

Towards monitoring and ensuring quality, safety and speedy construction of permanent shelters for the tsunami affected in Nagapattinam, a Shelter Advisory Group has been formed by NCRC. The group was

formed on 6th October and won the approval of the district administration on 9th October. The group, for which the District Collector is the chairman, consists of Prof. Shanthakumar, Mr. Tency, Sanitation Specialist, Auroville, Mr. Prasanth Hedao, Environment Specilaist, Auroville, District Revenue Officer (R&R), Nagapattinam, Special Deputy Collector (land acquisition), Nagapattinam, Executive Engineer, TDIU, Nagapattinam, Executive Engineer, TWAD BOARD, Nagapattinam, Superintendent Engineer, EB, Nagapattinam and a representative each from Gunnarshalla, Gujrat and NCRC. A Shelter Support Group for providing hand holding support to the NGOs and the field level staff involved in construction of permanent shelters in Nagapattinam was also constituted. The support team would play as the monitoring body of the Shelter Advisory Group. Besides, the Shelter Support Group would also give recommendations to the Shelter Advisory Group on quality, safety and progress of permanent shelter construction based on field visits.

Shelter Support Group
12 to 14 October 2006

The Shelter Support Group comprising a planner, architect, WATSAN specialist and civil engineer from Initiative for Habitat Development (IHD) visited selected construction sites in Nagapattinam. The group made its first round of field visits from 12 to 14th October. The major recommendations highlight the need to have basic tools, equipments and manpower in the site, general quality compliance and systems and maintenance of records at the site office. A shelter advisory group meet was held following this to review recommendations and evolve actions.

Children Core Group Meeting
14 October 2006

The monthly meeting of the core group for children was held at Nagapattinam Collectorate on 14th October. The participants discussed various issues and events related to children which included Child Labour Act, district level meeting of children in parliament, GO 248, PM Child Assistance Scheme, children's day celebration and exhibition to commemorate the second anniversary of tsunami. The meeting was attended by representatives from six NGOs and five children.

Shelter construction review meetings
17 and 24 October 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. The NGOs who were not willing to start were informed that even Government was willing to take up the construction work.

Workshop on Community Based Disaster Risk Management
31 October 2006

NCRC held a one day workshop on Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) on the 31st October 2006 in Main Conference hall, Collectorate, Nagapattinam. The district collector Shri. Tenkasi S. Jawahar inaugurated the workshop. The participants included community people from Kollidam, Nagapattinam, Vedaranyam, Sirkali and Sembanarkoil blocks of Nagapattinam, NGOs, and Government Officials. The resource persons facilitated sessions on 'Disaster Management Act and its implication', 'Role of community in disaster management', 'Boat safety methods'. This was followed by a group discussion which recommended forming village level disaster risk management teams that would be linked with NGOs and government team which work in that area. The resource persons included Ms. Annie George of NCRC, Col. James (Academy for Disaster management Education Planning and Training), Mr. Belgin of South Indian Fishermen Federation of Societies and R.Gopalan, Asst. Project officer, DRDA. ■

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