

## **Participatory Water Resource Management Programme (PWRM) “Pilot to the pilot project”( Weeding of South Rajan channel)**

Kattoor and Mahendrapalli Panchayats are situated in the Tail End of Cauvery basin in Kollidam Block Nagapattinam District. 95% the people belong to the Agriculture sector. The Water Users Association (WUA) has been in existence in the area since 2001. It was registered under the Societies Registration Act 1975 of Tamil Nadu and approved by the PWD department under the PIM Act. But it was inactive. As part of the PWRM Project of NCRC, it was reorganized and strengthened by including the representatives from all the hamlets in that Panchayat.

Even after water is let out for irrigation from Grand Anicut, farmers in this Panchayat get only a small flow of water because the channel is choked with weeds including Ipomea, Elephant grass and *kattamanakku* from Muthalai Medu regulator to Kulayadi channel, a distance of 4.5 Kms.

We organized a meeting on 22.09.2007 at Mahendrapalli Panchayat office under the auspices of the two Panchayat Presidents. WUA representatives, farmers and NCRC officials participated in the meeting and the problem was discussed at the micro level. A decision was taken to undertake the work under PWRM project. The farmers unanimously agreed to contribute 40% of the total cost and the remaining 60% was to be contributed from the project.

The WUA and the Panchayat members decided to depute 12 labourers for scaling the required man-days in this process as a pilot implementation strategy. Initially it was projected that 600 labourers would be required removal of weeds in this 4.5 km stretch. At the end of the day, it became clear that 180 man-days would be needed for this process.

On 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2007, the required labour force was organized and the work was completed within a day. As a result of this, an additional 30 acres of land could be cultivated. This successful participatory activity has created confidence and great enthusiasm among the farmers to undertake similar activities in the future too.