



Series No. 81

## FOCUS:

**Thinking-Learning-Reflecting-Doing-Modifying: Summarized Case Stories from the 3-Step Award, the 1st step (2)**

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### *Editor's Note...*

As you may have anticipated, the second release of case stories of the 3-Step Award is highlighted in this issue. There are two case stories from India focusing on community strengthening and environment related concerns affecting survival needs. Three other cases are from Sri Lanka tackling poverty issues, unfair treatment of tribal groups, and the women's effort to establish a water facility in their neighborhood. One case from Bangladesh revolves around development in the context of grassroots initiatives in partnership with an external institution particularly a non-government organization (NGO).

Sharing good and not-so-good experiences in developing disadvantaged communities is unending yet a rewarding boost.

It is quite a known reality that there are still many rich unspoken experiences in the communities that are left unsaid for all these years. These stories will be buried forever if we do not share them. The AHI English Newsletter is one of the many venues for mutual sharing.

After these two special series of the AHI newsletter, we hope to keep receiving more articles from all of you to continuously inspire the readers, community development workers, government, other institutions and the people in our villages to go on with their initiatives.

Take the challenge and wait no more.



## Case 7

### Strengthening Community Efforts to Sustain Project Outcomes

Venkateswara R. Satapathy  
Community Development Center (CDC), India,  
International Course 1984

#### 1. Introduction

Ajuru is a tribal habitation in Pachipenta mandal of Vizianagaram district. Mandal is a small geographic area comprising a population of 25,000 people in approximately 10 panchayats. Each Panchayat or hamlet will hold "Grama Sabha" (village meeting) two times a year to review their development as per their Micro Level Plans and restructure it. The grama sabha is mandatory in the Panchayat Raj Rule. Grama Sabha is also a platform where the needs of villages are discussed and forwarded to Mandal Sabha, where Mandal plans are consolidated and forwarded to District Development Committee at Zilla Parishat to finalize the budget estimates for the ensuing financial year. The geographic situation of the habitation is amid a mountain range along the boarder of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa with no proper connectivity resulted in far off situation of mainstream development. Illiteracy is high at 10% among men and 5% among women. The individual income level of the community members placed 10,000 families (70%) below poverty line. This is the village situation in the year 2003.

The year 2008 presents a different picture. The village is having a good road made of gravel, which makes transportation of vehicles possible. The community members proudly say that they mobilized the resources from their own panchayat (a village council in India) and they worked on the road to make it strong and durable.

They have protected drinking water mobilizing the resources from Nederland Action Program for Water and Sanitation Development. They have developed two water tanks for percolation and minor irrigation. They are growing fishes in these tanks. Availability of fish in tribal villages is a boon as diseases like goiter are recurring in the tribal context due to iodine deficiency. The government is distributing fortified salt through Public Distribution System to tackle this problem. Also, now the community has a

permanent building for school. The school-age children are regularly going to school.

They have a community grain bank, which lends them food grains during difficult periods of the year. The food scarcity is usually at two periods for the tribal communities – for tribal communities thriving on the hills with shifting cultivation - from January to June every year when the hills experience the hot summer. And their survival during these periods is on different kinds of tubers available in the forest area and the fauna like wild fowl, wild boars and small game animals like rabbits, mountain lizards etc. For the tribal communities on plains this scarcity food is between May and August. At the beginning of the agricultural season these communities spend on seed, sowing etc. Their money is invested more on these agricultural operations. During these periods they go for small debts for their consumption needs agreeing to pay in kind during harvest season.

Now there is a change in the crop patterns. Besides millets they are growing other food crops, vegetables and fruits. The virgin soils of the valley are giving good yields. Small merchants from the nearby towns are coming in small goods vehicles and are purchasing the fruits and vegetables on their farm. They have three women self- help groups (SHG) with regular savings and Bank linkages for income generation programs. Ramanamma, the SHG leader is active with many activities like participation in SHG activity, representing at village, mandal and Panchayat levels. She is busy in mobilizing new resources for their community. She honed her qualities of leadership through different training programs. Ramanamma, a woman leader, is respected by many officials. A sleepy village five years ago not recognized in their own mandal is now familiar to all the government officers whose visits to the village are very frequent at present. The Banks are willing to advance more money to the SHGs of the village.

#### 2. How did it all happen?

CDC is entrusted with the Sustainable Tribal Empowerment Project taken up by CARE in the sub-plan Tribal areas of the North Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. For five years, CDC worked in the tribal areas of Pachipenta, Salur and Makkuva mandals covering an area of 246 habitations like Ajuru. Some of them live on the hills while some are at the foothills. All of them are thriving from hill



resources either directly or indirectly. Working on key result areas of strengthening community based organizations (CBOs), education, health and livelihoods, CDC worked along the program guidelines in capacity building. CDC is particularly building the capacities of the communities in developing, managing and sustaining their institutions and planning their own development around their needs. This is to let them explore their capacities.

Focused training is given on strengthening SHGs making them aware on financial systems, bookkeeping and critical rate of indexing. Some of them are trained in Panchayat Raj Institutions. They are taken to different exposures of good examples of SHG and micro-finance, micro-level projects (MLP), better agricultural practices, and natural resource management. The community members started interacting with government, attending meetings, training and workshops. Ramanamma, the SHG leader attended an International seminar on GO-NGO collaboration for Sustainable Area Development Program.

The transformation as happened in Ajuru did not repeat in exact way in all the 243 habitations. But each has more than one success stories. With a focused program during the last five years, CDC has a string of achievements. Community members feel that the project support is essential for some more time during this critical period of transition. Ramanamma, a community member from AJURU takes initiative on behalf of other women groups in requesting CDC to facilitate the process of organizing and strengthening the SHGs of tribal women in continuation of STEP project. They feel that it is now time to work on more serious issues of governance and advocacy.

CDC had initial discussions with these women groups and made a consensus that communities need to work in a concerted way to improve their standards of livelihood by reviewing micro level plan, by relating their MLP status to gram sabha regularly, by human resource development through Education, Training, Livelihood, by participation and decision making in Panchayat raj, and by tribal lands Special Panchayats.

### **3. The Plan of Action**

CDC will take the role of a catalyst in mobilizing communities during this vital transition phase by

working with the existing community action groups. At the habitation level the animators will continue monitoring the activities of the Community Action Groups (CAGs). These animators will report the result of monitoring to CDC during the monthly review meeting. The CDC team will have a cluster level meeting with CAGs' representatives on alternate months to review and plan their actions.

CDC is trying to sustain the project outcomes for some time to build up the level of confidence of the communities towards sustainability. In particular, these are 1.) to cover 243 habitations of CDC development area, 2.) the nature of the program which is empowerment of the tribal communities and focus will be on capacity-building of the members, 3.) the local institutes promoted by the communities will be strengthened for sustainability, and 4.) social mobilization of the communities will be through regular meetings, information inputs and training.

### **4. Project Outcomes**

The project outcomes that CDC planned to sustain are the activities of the Community Action Groups, which in turn are supporting the Community Based Organizations (CBOs) at the village level and their periodical interface with the mandal level authorities. These basic activities are becoming a lifeline between the village Panchayats and the District level authorities.

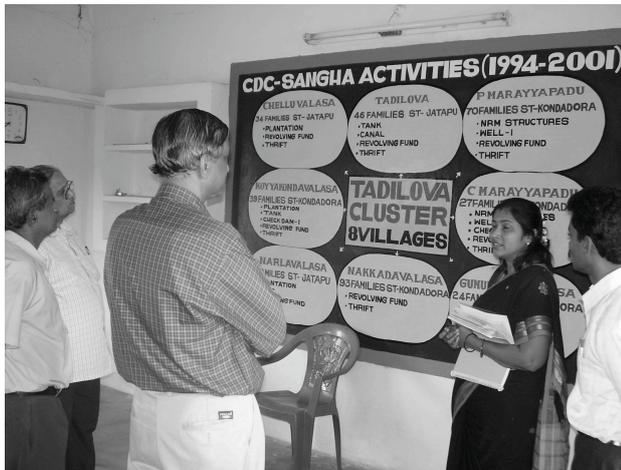
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**Case 8**

### **Making Tribal Women Aware of the Interlinking Environmental Issues and Survival**

Annapurna Satapathy  
Community Development Center  
(CDC), India, ILDC 1993

#### **1. Introduction**

This case highlights the initiative of tribal women who in India who are made aware of the interweaving connectedness of environmental issues and concerns vis-a-vis life survival. Abundantly accessible natural resources would mean to be a big contribution to a sufficient life. Ironically, the tribals who lived next to nature had no clue about it. This article is all about raising their awareness.



The chart of CDC Sangha activities.

## 2. Awareness in protecting the precious natural resources

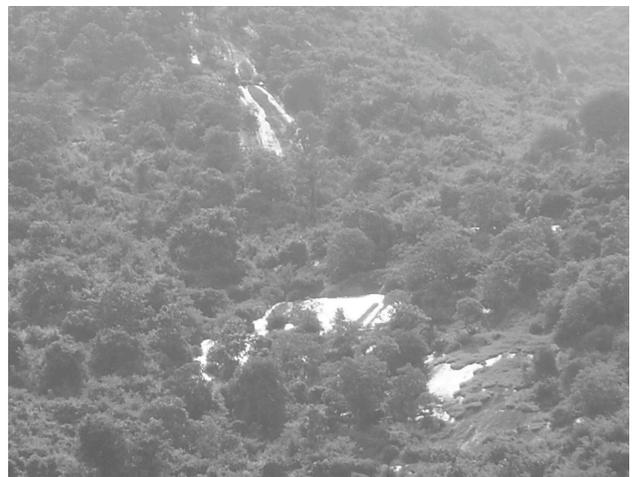
Annapurna is working since last two decades as a development catalyst in the tribal areas of Pachipenta, Salur and Makkuva, India. While undertaking the activities of afforestation with the women groups, Annapurna mobilized some resources which are mostly from the government, the Integrated Tribal Development Agency, and the communities in the form of "shramadhan". Shramadhan is a form of voluntary participation of the community members in community activities without any wages. In other words these people work collectively to perform a community task for free.

Afforestation is the process of converting land not previously forested into forest by planting trees. She uses different group dynamics and cultural-oriented strategies to achieve her objectives of raising the awareness of the tribal women. The festivals related to nature and crops are highlighted and such values are revived and respected. The tribal communities in tune with the vestiges of primitive roots of civilization have many festivals and/or rituals to celebrate that have linkages with nature. This was how their awareness began.

The annual cycle of their crops are linked to culture and festivals. For example, at the approach of the tribal new year (March and April) every year a mixture of all seeds are collected by the religious Head of the tribe and is spread in a community land. After a shower or two of rains the sprouts of seeds will come up. The tribal head will look and analyze the

seed sprouts with good germination. The tribal leaders will announce the crops, which are going to give good yields during the next year. Members will cultivate those crops in their lands.

There are certain tribal villages who hold special festivals worshipping their gods for bio-diversity. The Savara communities celebrates the festival of god of erudition. They worship all the 24 letters of their language on this occasion. Savaras have their own dialect with a script, whereas other tribes have their own dialects but without a script. All the tribals in the area participate in these festivals.



Environmental degradation.

## 3. Identifying own resources at micro-level to address their needs

Organizing regular meetings at the village level, Annapurna facilitates subtly to make the women to study and analyze their own surroundings to identify the natural resources making them productive enough to meet their needs. This process enabled them to identify certain areas where community voluntary and collective action could solve some simple but significant problems. The spirit of volunteerism in community actions thus becomes a commendable strategy in her work. In some villages where she undertook plantation in community wastelands, there was no monetary inputs involved at all.

With the interactions arranged between the community technical members and technical experts, the women are able to think beyond their present framework and invited the supporting ideas of the technical personnel. Parallel to this



interaction, necessary training are planned to make the perception of these women more scientific.



Technical persons giving advise to the people.

#### **4. Biodiversity, regeneration and food security**

Annapurna facilitated the tribal women and youth in making a concerted and persistent effort for the chronic problems of their communities. For example, she identifies a cluster of villages with a common center of water catchment on a hill around which these villages are scattered. This addressed the problem of water shortage every year from the month of January to June.

Involving technical personal, Annapurna facilitated the women to go around and identify the water catchment points on the hill. The women from all these villages had a long dialogue on the possible remedial measures. A master plan is prepared for treatment of the soil and the forest from the point of the water catchments on the mountain till the peripheral villages around the mountains. The women worked collectively on this master plan to use different techniques to replenish the dwindling water resources. The tribal groups made continuous efforts for a period of three years.

#### **5. Visible Results**

The results became visible and unbelievable such as 1.) there is an increase in the level of the water table in all villages, 2.) the village suffering from shortage of water in their community wells for six months a year experienced that their wells did not dry up during summer since last three years, 3.) a mountain stream revived and the flowing waters

from the monsoons became perennial supplying water for irrigation to the next village even after the monsoon, 4.) surplus water from the check-dam are channeled to the percolation tank where the water is stored for irrigation during the summer months, 5.) soil humidity in all these villages increased to support different crops in the dry lands.

These developments resulted also in the increase in crop yields of their millets to such an extent that their dry periods with food shortage is shortened. The community won't starve anymore.



Community people are tilling the land.

#### **6. Revival of traditional fruits from the tribal pockets**

There are certain pockets in the forest area wherein various fruits are naturally grown and harvested by the tribal communities as their traditional rights. There are many such pockets for tamarind, custard fruit, gooseberry, and jackfruit, among others. During the last decade the product from these areas started decreasing gradually for various reasons including deforestation. Such areas are identified by the communities to being affected with this decrease in the product. Annapurna motivated these communities in around six such pockets and mobilizing technical expertise from different sources worked on long-term plan to treat this problem. One of the examples is the custard fruit in Marayanadu cluster where they identified a stem borer destroying the plants in the area.

Groups are organized to identify and cut infested plants, root out and burn them. At the same time, all



Traditional agricultural crops.

the plants are treated at the root by loosening the soil and provided necessary mulching to protect the soil humidity for some more time during the summer months. For tamarind, jack fruit, goose berry and wild mango, seeds are collected from the champion trees in the forest and free sowing is organized with women and youth at the end of summer in areas where the crop is on the decrease.

In all these instances, the response from nature is quick and encouraging. There is an increase in the quality and yield of custard fruit. The community could identify young plants of different varieties of trees on these hill slopes as result of free sowing.

### ***7. Opting for alternatives in income generation***

The tribal communities enjoying the yields of the forest started marketing the excess. Adding to this reality there is a change in the attitude of tribals on the limitation of these varieties. In many villages, people started growing fruits like papaya, guava and melons for commercial purposes. With the betterment of approach roads by the government, small trucks coming to the villages to collect these fruits for sale in the nearby towns in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh has become a familiar sight. It aided a lot on people's income.

### ***8. Capacity building for women to mobilize resources for their development***

Annapurna strategically worked to develop the capabilities of the women groups through a multi-pronged effort. The participation of women in panchayat is encouraged, by imparting a number of

training from the government and other sources. Increased participation from these areas not only multiplied the number of elected leaders but there is an improvement in their levels of participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The quality of grama sabha increased to such an extent that the accountability of the budgets of the panchayats is taken cared of. There is a resolution for the increase in welfare and development budget estimates at each panchayat to cover the eligible members. The capacity building training increased their participation in programs like joint forestry management for their effective implementation and expected positive outcomes.

### ***9. Exposures to Best Practices***

The community members involved in the Natural Resource Management (NRM) activities are taken to Ralegaon Siddi where Anna Hazare's Micro Watershed Project with community involvement came out as a replicable best practice. The group consisting of women and youth visited the place. They interacted with Anna Hazare and the community members who explained the interventions. This exposure changed the attitude of the community members so much that they became an army with meticulous planning, implementation and management (PIM) of the program and made it a factor in the micro-watershed program of Marayapadu hills. The exposure program is an effective strategy that inspired them to do their own part.

### ***10. Management and sustainability of the structures***

As a gesture of accepting the ownership of the project, the community members further developed their plans for management of the structures like rock bond, checked dams and bodies of water. Once a year, the committee inspects all the structures and advices any repairs, reinforcements and maintenance activities and teams are formed to attend the work, and raising necessary funds to procure some needed materials or something.

### ***11. Advocacy and lobbying***

Simplicity, honesty and innocence of the tribals with their own dialects and little communication with the outer world made them deprived, excluded and vulnerable. This situation since generations



made them lose their fertile lands and tracing back to the uncultivable, uneven, rocky lands along foot hills of the Eastern Ghats, depending on the forest yields as food substitutes.

Annapurna worked with these communities to improve their forest products and made them aware of their rights. Panchayat Raj institution is strengthened through planned and appropriate training and exposures. Laws and acts concerning the forest lands and the tribal lands are elucidated to the women and youth with appropriate government resources. Training on land survey and revenue records and forest records are given to the youth. Series of training helped them to demystify the acts causing problems and harassment from the departments of forest and revenue. This knowledge is also helping them to identify their rights on the tribal and forest lands as per the prevailing acts.



Cooperation in the farmland.

## 12. Conclusion

Apparently the tribal people, with which women were the frontliners, could have improved their way of thinking, elevated their income source, re-engaged in environment friendly farming, regenerated the forest with trees and domestic fruits, revived the almost forgotten rituals and festivals to respect and thank nature, and gained their dignity.

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### Case 9

#### **POVERTY IS OUR NAME**

Sr. Noel Christine Fernando  
Sramabimani Kendraya  
Sri Lanka, ILDC 1991



Village women discussing with Sr. Christine.

### 1. P - Poverty

POVERTY is the name fitting to us. POVERTY is a cluster of several villages in the electorate of Jaela, in the Gampaha district of the western province Sri Lanka. Jaela is a provincial town on the way from Colombo to Katunayaka International Airport. The names of the villages that constituted POVERTY are Suduwella, Wahatiyagama, Dalathura, Tudella, Uswatta, Indiwitiya, Chandra Place, and Ekala. There are about 600 families involved in the so-called cluster. Our story of poverty is related to health and environmental degradation.

### 2. O - Oppression

The issue of high cost of living was brought to our weekly meeting as one of the major problems with which POVERTY encounters daily. The various aspects of the problem were discussed at length. It was asked what really causes daily living so difficult and unbearable. Various views and opinions emerged at the meetings. We, the POVERTY leaders, helped to analyze their weekly expenditures and learn what was spent for? The analysis revealed that they spend on food, medicines, children's education, husband's personal expenditure for alcohol, etc.

As regards health, the following questions were posed to us. Why our people fall sick so often? Can't that be prevented? Should one go to the doctor or hospital every time one falls sick? Aren't there any traditional home remedies? What about the indigenous medicines, which is less costly? At the end of this process we decided to form health



committees in the villages in order to explore some alternative possibilities.

There was another aspect to the health problem. This particular matter was discussed just after the major flood in 2006. In describing our problem, it was mentioned by many that the impact of flood was most severe this time than on previous occasion. The question was raised again what really caused severe floods. Was there an increase in the rainfall? Why didn't flood subside this time?



Flood water came into the houses.

Through rigid inquiry, POVERTY found that this time the rainwater got stagnated and did not pass through the canals into the sea due to the half built express highway. There was also a long discussion on the purpose of the express highway. POVERTY members realized that the express highway is built for the use of wealthy class of people and the foreign investors to travel faster to and from Colombo and the international airport at Katunayaka. It was constructed without any regard for its impact on the environment and the people around the vicinity.

### 3. V - Violence

Lethargy and apathy are common characteristics wherever culture of silence prevails. Here, too, most of our people tend to believe that the oppressive situations cannot be changed. Gradually the discussions that followed helped us to realize that the politicians do things only when and if they are advantageous to themselves. They are so opportunistic that whenever they do any social welfare activity they

expect something in return from the people. If not, they hardly take interests in the affairs of the ordinary people. On the other hand, people depend on their local politicians to solve all their problems. That creates an opportunity for the politicians to exploit them further.

Now, whenever we try to be independent and acted on our own, the local politicians begin to create troubles for us because they felt that their authority is undermined by us, the POVERTY leaders. However we got things done which we could not get for so many years. A politician whom we once met at the office of the political authority yelled at us for coming there without his knowledge.

Another local politician organized a fund collection promising us to supply a pipeline for drinking water. Although the money was collected from each family, nothing happened about the promised supply of water. Then we organized ourselves and met the particular politician to tell him that either he should supply water or return our money. Within two weeks we got back our money.

While this process was in operation we also received help to construct our toilets. We are now questioning the authorities about the quality of toilets. Gradually people have begun to realize including the issues of health and environmental protection, which are matters directly related to politics.

When we looked back into our past, we, the POVERTY leaders realized that the marginalization of communities for all these years has been an act of structural violence inflicted on us. Such violence against women has prevailed from generations. Powerful men in their families and institutions such as the family, academic, the Church, and the State have not only failed to put a stop to this form of inequality but have even justified and perpetuated it making women vulnerable as victims of violence.

### 4. E - Empowerment

Once, Sr. Christine asked a poor village woman what life was? Her answer was having one baby after another, caring for them, taking good care of her husband, cleaning, cooking, pounding rice and washing clothes. This was the typical lifestyle of a woman until recent times. Sr. Christine asked then whether she liked her way of life. "No", she said.

Our duties we believe (now) should extend far be-



yond husband, children and home. We discarded traditional sex roles and seek to fulfill our social responsibilities and achieve equality in all spheres of life. A woman burdened with multiple roles of life as the social companion, mother, housekeeper, income earner, have begun to reflect on her servile position and thus we have come a long way and women power has become strong today. "Educate a woman and you educate a community".

Educating women means nothing but educating and empowering the entire families and communities. Changing of attitudes about the role of women and providing equal opportunity is therefore a must.

As regards POVERTY, we now realize that we too have a civil responsibility and also the capacity to get things done. We then grouped ourselves to meet the district secretaries. Thus there emerged new challenges which the POVERTY leaders have to take upon ourselves. In a petition to the district secretary we drafted our demands. One is the cutting a canal across Express High Way and the second is the clearance of all the connecting canals.

When the POVERTY leaders realized the real cause of flooding in the villages, we designed a plan of actions to eliminate it. During the discussions we realized also that the bureaucracy is responsible for neglect of the irrigation canals.

For the first time we sent the petitions to all the responsible local authorities. When the response was delayed we decided to meet them in their office. It was for the first time in our life that we as a group met the bureaucracy on a common issue.

## 5. R - Risks

Women are playing a major role that involved a lot of risk taking especially when dealing with the politicians who are corrupt. Negotiating with the civic authorities was not a major issue although it was a new experience, but meeting their elected member for the parliament was a real hurdle. Firstly, the obstacle came from the officers at the office of the politician. They would not welcome us at their offices. Very hesitantly they once gave us an appointment to meet him. But whenever we went there what we usually hear from them is that the 'boss' has gone abroad or still not come home from Colombo.

Often the POVERTY leadership had to wait for hours and hours before meeting him. Once we were

lucky that we met him and he promised to approve our demands but they are still not implemented. So we had to again follow the same procedure to meet him which ate up much of our time.

Finally, the authorities too realized that we cannot be deterred. They noticed that we are now organized and empowered and politically alert. One politician once asked us from where we learned our strategy.

At the end, the funds for canal clearance were approved. But, the POVERTY leaders did not stop there because clearance of canals is done on contracts through private individuals who are in some way connected to the politicians. People had to learn to be vigilant and constantly check whether the work is done according to the set standards; the length, breath and depth of the canals and funds allocated for the project are utilized properly.

## 6. T - Tears of love

The process that POVERTY went through since the year 2006 entailed instances of sorrow, stress, pain and joy. There were moments when we really shed tears. But all those were tears of genuine love. We are aware that the process of loving people has not come to an end. We have a long, long way to move forward and join with thousands of others and accompanying them in this long journey. When we are in solidarity with others in genuine love we see signs of hope.

7. Y - Yes to life means nurture and protecting life at any cost. Being the typical caregivers to children, husbands and to the wider society, women play a vital role in their villages. Women are patient, persistent and courageous given the right moment and opportunity. Saying yes to life is a true indicator that POVERTY is now being empowered. Perhaps she has to be renamed.

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## Case 10

### Struggling & Discriminated Telingu Community

Marie Princy

Janawaboda Kendraya, Sri Lanka  
non-AHI alumna

#### 1. Historical background

When examining the various ethnic communities in



Tsunami affected area.

Sri-Lanka, the Telingu also has a long history along with other communities such as the Tamils, Sinhalese and Muslims. They lived a tribal lifestyle and have moved from place to place. They were engaged in fortune telling and entertaining people with animal dancing as their means of livelihoods. The place of origin of these ethnic groups could be traced back to the areas of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala in India. They have arrived and settled down in Sri Lanka many years ago for various reasons.

In the olden days, they pitched camps in open spaces and spent weeks and months. They never required permanent houses. They never felt a need to possess permanent houses. They lived freely in the North or South or East or West and felt at home in any part of Sri-Lanka. They lived an itinerant life throughout the year and stopped when they were tired and pitched a camp wherever an open space was available. They lived a contented life and shared their joy with one another. They lived a spiel life and thus experienced freedom and joy. They did not become a burden on anyone and did not hesitate to share among themselves in the tribe whatever they had.

Historically Sri-Lanka has been a caste conscious society. This community was a low caste. As such, the recognition of the rights of this community was not though as an important issue. The community suffered as a result. It is believed that the reason why they lived in large groups in different areas was to develop their capacity to face the threats and challenges they received from outside.

## **2. How marginalized people get organized**

It was in 1995 that we met the Telingu community in Negombo. That was a community of about 25

families. At that time they were living in houses in the coastal area of Negombo Town but the walls and floors were not cemented. These houses were obviously not stable. When the children get married and find no room in the parental houses they moved out to build another temporary house on the beach itself. It was an accepted fact that the beach belongs to the state. But some of the wealthy Sinhala speaking families claimed ownership to such land and charged monthly rent from these families.

During this time the landless people of Negombo was organized as "Negombo United People's Organization" (NUPO) which was the only organization of the poor in the area. The Telingu community received membership of NUPO and actively participated in its affairs hoping to receive their personalities and learn new habits required to face life in the modern world. It was reported that addiction to alcoholism is a problem in their community. Fortune telling and fishing are two sources of livelihoods that many of these people are engaged in. Some work as laborers also. There are others who do business on cheap ornaments at festivals.

The children are attending at the Junior Sinhala Medium School in the nearby vicinity. As the members of NUPO, they have taken interest in health, educational and cultural issues affecting people. They participated in the united efforts made to find solutions to their common problems affecting all communities. In the initial stages others did not have much respect for these people. But later on, they were able to win the confidence of everybody and received equal respect.

They joined the NUPO organization in 1995. Since then they took keen interest to educate their children. They also bring up their children to gain respect from all. With the knowledge and information they accumulated by being deeply involved in the common activities, they are developing their self confidence and leadership skills. They now have the capacity to negotiate or air out with the authorities their burning issues in a rational manner and secure their rights.

## **3. Tsunami disaster and their fate**

In 2004, when the 13 districts in the whole country were devastated by Tsunami, these 23 families who were living in the Sea Street also got severely affected. The Tsunami attacked them when they were just making various efforts to solve their housing problem. They were made really helpless because



by this time there were some women who have gone to the Middle-East for employment as house maids. In the case of others it was just a month or two since they completed their houses investing all their savings. For some other families the husbands have gone to distant places in search of work.

All their belongings got destroyed but when compared with the other districts such as Hambantota and Amparai there were no deaths among these families. But within the Negombo area it was these families which were really affected by Tsunami. On the day when they were struck by Tsunami, it is from the Janawaboda Kendraya that they sought help as there were no others known to whom they could go. Janawaboda Kendraya promptly organized some relief services for them.

However, they had to get use to live in a refugee camp. That was a new and rich experience they ever gained in life. Although they were a community which used to live a tribal lifestyle, after Tsunami they were hard-pressed to live along with the Sinhalese community, under whom they suffered discrimination because of their social status. These people have suffered inhuman treatment at the hands of the higher castes. They were compelled to live among 129 Sinhalese Catholic and a few Muslim families at the refugee camp in Vellaveediya.

The only source of consolation they had was the few Sinhalese families with whom they maintained a good relationship during the time when they lived in harmony on the beach side. Nevertheless, the 15 families of their own tribe was also a source of strength. They were always discriminated against when they were among others to receive common services provided by the government and other agencies. They used to share their sorrows and pains that they have been suffering as a result of such maltreatment. Moreover they come to the center to discuss about their health and some issues that especially women are facing.

During this time a journalist on the invitation of Janawaboda Kendraya wrote about the plight of the community. The Sinhala catholic community of Vellaveediya and the Parish Priest got very disturbed about the article. He rejected everything that the article claimed happening at the camp and that there was no discrimination against the Telingu community and expressed his protest over the article.

The Parish Priest called the Telingu community for a meeting and inquired about their complaints. They at that instance felt helpless again and were very scared to meet him. They thought that their situation will be worsened and were worried that they would be expelled from the camp. After the meeting they rushed to the Janawaboda Kendraya and reported what happened at the meeting with the Parish Priest. The journalist too met the Priest to present all information that he has collected about the situation of the Telingu community in the camp. The Priest then understood what the community really suffered from. Janawaboda Kendraya also realized the urgency of educating the Sinhala community regarding the values of equality of all people. Educating all concerns is a practical approach.

#### *4. The struggle to get houses*

Since then the situation of Telingu community has changed. It is now two and a half years since they started living there. Of the 18 families in the camp 13 have received houses in various housing projects



The shelter they need has come true.

One group has received houses in the Don Bosco project organized by the Salasanan Fathers. Another group got houses from the project initiated by the Parish Priest. There are others who have pawned or sold their jewelries and bought land and built houses on it with the assistance given by the priest.

But there were five families left because they did not receive houses. The main reason is that the divisional secretary and other authorities declared that they are not eligible for land because their children have been given houses by that Parish Priest of Vellaveediya. They maintained that only one house can be given for a family. But then the government has



not given a single house for anyone. It is either the church or the other non government agencies which have built houses for the people. Thus, these five families of the Telingu community and another six families in the camp who suffered from similar problems began to engage in an ongoing battle with the authorization to get their housing problem sought out. They, in order to seek solution to their problems, have joined the Tsunami Survivors National Alliance (TSNA) which has emerged since one and half years ago. It is a network of representatives from the nine districts.

They informed every government officer from the village to the highest political and administrative levels and also the religious and the NGO leaders. The issue has been discussed in the newspapers through the journalists known to us so that the issue was given publicity at the national level. After a long struggle they have been now told that by July 2007 they too would receive houses. The Tsunami affected community from Vellaveediya is engaged in an unceasing long struggle for their rights. Janawaboda Kendraya is their sources of support, inspiration and strength. There are many lessons which we can learn from this long struggle.

## 5. Gains

Paulo Freire posits that the characteristics of oppressed people are those who do not have self-confidence, in fear, always trying to depend on others, have negative view on others, always saying "No", "Can't" and some other pessimistic expressions or thoughts. The person who goes to animate the oppressed must have a deeper understanding of such characteristics and should help them free. By patiently listening to their problems and making a conducive environment for discussion, we can help solve the problems of the poor people.

As a result of their hard work they were able to make their residence in Don Bosco and in the city of Kochchikade. Due to racial chaos many times they were subjected to suspicion because they barely speak the language of Tamil.

In different ways they were able to solve their own problems. They have organized themselves through NUPO. They altogether worked with great responsibility and sacrifice in the midst of tremendous national problems. They became honorable community people of Sri-Lanka though the society has not given the same treatment to each and every one.

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## Case 11

### Udahena Women's Initiative for Village Water Facility

Sumika Perera

Women's Resource Center (WRC), Sri Lanka  
ILDC 2001

#### 1. Background

Udahena is a small village in Dodangaslanda A.G.A. division in Kurunegala District, North Western Province (N.W.P.). It is situated about 30 kilometers away from the town. The total number of families in the village is about 225. There are four small sectors of Udahena village. Water has become a great problem for the villages here, as this village is situated in a hilly area.

Women of the families that live on the upper part of the hills faced great difficulties in finding water for their household and other needs. Fulfilling water needs of the family is a part of women's duties. The villagers who live in the lower part of the hills faced the water problem severely during the drought season. They had to face various kinds of diseases, because of the lack of drinking water and most of the people were not using the proper toilets. This situation made them face additional hardships.

Their main livelihood is cultivating pepper, coconut and other crops. During the droughts these villagers find it hard to get water for their cultivations. On the other hand, the number of families in this village for which the "drinking water is not a problem is about 10 to 12. The reason is that they are rich families. They could afford to have deep wells and get water with the use of electric water pumps.

#### 2. Udahena Women's Action

There are some groups of women in these Udahena villages who took the initiative for the matters affecting their villages. These women got some guidance from the Women's Resource Center.

While the villagers of this village were facing the severe water problem, this group of women came to know that the North Western Provincial Council was making the arrangements to resolve the water problem in the North Western Province. Soon they



started to find information regarding this. A.G.A. office came to the village to find out if the organizations of the village were ready to take the responsibility of the project. The funeral aids society (Maranadara Samithy) and the other community organizations which had more males as members, refused to take the responsibility. That was because the project requires much labor contribution.

But the Udahena women activists did not hesitate to take this responsibility. That was because they had more difficulties with water problem and they had much experiences in working with women in their locality. Therefore they had enough strength and confidence. The women activists who worked as the group leaders went house to house in their own village and three other adjoining villages and made the people aware of the water project.

### **3. Group-building, leadership and cooperation**

They were able to build up or organize community groups in four other sectors of the village. About 15 to 20 members were included in each group. There were nine leaders appointed for these nine groups. It was a special fact that all these nine leaders were women. Udahena women's society leaders spoke at the meeting held in order to give awareness to the villagers of these four sectors of the village. In the end, the members of 210 families agreed to give their assistance for the water projects. This women's group joined together with the Provincial Council, Local Government Council and Vason Foundation and then started the project. They also built up village level environment committees such as the Tender Committees and Water Committees. Majority of the leaders of these committees were amazingly women.

Later these women leaders had to face great challenges. They had to find a natural water source from their locality to get water for the village. In this task they started climbing up the hills situated four to five kilometers away from their village. And in the end they were able to find a water source at the top of the hill of "Nawgala". Then they started the project by bringing fountain water from the top of the hill and distribute among 210 families. The funds were allowed only for cement and other very essential materials for the project. All other needs were fulfilled by the labor provided by the people of this locality. Seventy five percent (75%) of the labor had been provided by women in the area.

Each family had to work for 16 days. They got ready with the packets of meals early in the morning and started climbing up the mountain. They had to carry sacks of cement on their backs along with the other equipments. With all these heavy loads they had to climb about four to five kilometers to reach the top. They worked till dark and returned home. Proper management was there as regards to appointing people as working group leaders. They received assistance from the government officers in this task.

### **4. Success**

After working for two years in this manner they were able to build up a tank that can store 40,000 units of water and nine supporting pressure tanks. Fixing pipes to bring water from top of the hill had been done by these villagers. They worked hard for two years until they got sores in their hands.

Finally the village got the water facility because of these courageous women who worked hard from the bottom of their hearts. In return they also received continuous assistance from the people of the village. Now these women do not have to walk four to five kilometers with the pots of water on their heads.

Two years before the villagers did not have lavatories. The villagers had to face various health problems those days. Now the situation has changed a lot. Udahena women's leaders gave a good example to the entire N.W.P. by guiding the community with a great courage towards great task in the midst of massive hardships. The women got leadership to change their society. They made a big change.

This article crystalized the potentials of women to contribute to the betterment of their society. Even water installation was indeed achieved.

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### **Case 12**

#### **Community-Based Experiences among Development Partners and MASES**

Mohammad Luthfur Rahman  
MASES, Bangladesh  
ILDC 1990

***1. Started as a local charity organization responding to the felt need***



Manab Sheba Shangstha or MASES was established in 1981 in a rural village of Keshabpur Upazilla (Sub-District), Jessore District in South-Western part of Bangladesh. It is a non-profit, non-governmental development organization responding to the felt needs of the local needy people by social workers, academicians and philanthropists headed by Mohammad Luthfur Rahman.



Mohammad Luthfur Rahman in a meeting.

The philosophy of MASES is “Service is the Noble religion of mankind.” It started as a local charity organization and worked for a decade engaged in various types of development activities. This was a transitional phase for the organization. As the organization gathered experiences and knowledge from national and international sharing, it gradually gained strength and capability to elevate itself to the status of a mid level national organization.

## **2. Consistent to be need-based**

MASES in 1981 was so much concerned about the services and public health matters of local fishermen (lower caste Hindu) community, cobbler community and poor class of people all year around. The local people especially children and women were suffering from diseases and malnutrition. Many people died a premature death. MASES came forward to assist them, providing primary health care services by setting up Friday clinic and feeder school in the locality due to the appeal and also because of our sense of responsibility.

Then it was seen that only health services do not meet their daily or basic needs. The women of the community requested us to take money from them weekly and form a saving deposit. They wanted to

get small loan from the deposit for making nets and purchasing instruments for fishing. MASES started group forming with savings deposit. A total of 12 groups were formed consisting 140 women. MASES distributed small loan of Tk.200-300 for net making and purchasing other fishing instruments. This is sought to alleviate the poor living condition of the marginalized people in the village.

People of the remote villages were neglected and deprived of basic human rights. They were very poor and lived from hand to mouth. Little by little non-formal primary education and skill training was extended to these places where a large number of people were deprived from basic education. Financial support come from the villagers to run these schools. MASES emphasized non-formal primary education and non-formal adult education, life-based education and occupational skill development training. Finance plays a vital role in human life, and economic freedom is critical.

The health and hygiene education and life oriented education classes were opened in the villages for the illiterate villagers and adolescents to improve their health and economic condition. In fact MASES and the beneficiaries did not know the idea of savings and indigenous knowledge about their daily health practices. In the working session both the beneficiaries and MASES learned a lot about economic development strategies through savings, income generating activities (IGA) and best health practices.

Seventy two percent (72%) of the families had no cultivated land of their own and 45% of the families cultivated others' land and got some crops to live. After starting the saving program MASES was engaged in improving their agricultural technical support and small financial support. MASES formed 344 groups of women and men. As need base, the members of the groups got credit support for their IGA like pottery, rice husking, goat rearing, cow fattening, can and bamboo works, nets making, grocery and others. Skill training were provided accordingly for better performance. They could invest the money and earn profit to maintain their families.

## **3. Extended activities one by one to be holistic**

The beneficiaries wanted to change their traditional sanitation system by installing sanitary latrine from MASES WATSAN program. Now the targeted community practices hygienic sanitation and use pure water for their daily family uses, cooking and drinking. After coming into contact with MASES



the targeted villagers and communities knew about the benefit of having a small family and knowledge of family planning, primary health care (PHC), sanitation, environment protection through planting and uses of safe water. They were able to change their state of mind by direct cooperation with the organization. They did not know the importance of nutrition. Lack of knowledge about nutrition, a lot of their children including infants and mothers died a pre-mature death for malnutrition. MASES demonstrated vegetable plots jointly with the beneficiaries, and distributed the seeds to them.



The education program for the children.

MASES learned that the vegetable garden was not only for their family use, but also to earn some extra money which led to their family development and less malnutrition. Twenty five thousand families now knew well how to keep their PHC and sanitation practices, preventive health care education, personal hygiene, reproductive health, child health care education, AIDS awareness, and so on. Three trained masons could make a small business by installing village sanitation center. And 2,790 hygienic pit latrines and 115 tube wells for safe drinking water were installed by themselves. About 35,000 families participated in the development process through MASES programs and activities in 2006.

The environmental situation is degraded in the area. Firstly, MASES initiated plantation activities through planting of wood seedlings and fruit seedlings in 1987. As the next step MASES sold tree seedlings with low cost to the beneficiaries. Most of the villagers collected coconut, mango, orange, papaya, and peoria from the core nursery and planted them in their own limited home land, farming land and ails of cultivated land. Self confidence emerged among the beneficiaries and MASES.

Poor villagers were unaware of human rights. They were directly and indirectly exploited and ignored by the village political leaders and local elected leaders. MASES saw the situation and decided with the beneficiaries to undertake human rights program with the help of national humanitarian organization like Bangladesh Human Rights Commission (BHRC), and Coordination Council of Human Rights of Bangladesh (CCHRB). As a result the victims got legal support to protect them from illegal torturing and became aware of human rights. Now they are able to speak freely and work actively. They can already take part in any decision making in the local government as well as in the family. Ten leaders among the beneficiaries were elected as the local government councilors.

#### ***4. The Enlightened Village Movement Initiative***

During the long time involvement tracing back in 1981, the beneficiaries and MASES learned a lot of lessons from experiences, which were applied in the field of development such as group formation, capacity building, institutional building, and saving practices. They were able to change their lifestyle for the better.

Inspired by these experiences, MASES has developed a model called the ***“Enlightened Village Model”***. This comprehensive model involved skill development training, education program, health services, social forestry, water and sanitation, legal aid, poverty alleviation program, institutional building, advocacy, disabled and elderly welfare, children and women development, and human rights. Community-based experience is amazing!

## **FLASH ARTICLE**

### **Dalit Cases**

S.J.Prabhu  
ARPED, India, ILDC 2005

#### ***1. Introduction***

Right now I am a member of Dalit Land Rights Federation (DLRF) of Tamil Nadu, which is being headed by Mr. C. Nicholus. DLRF is a federation of fifteen organizations and social movement initiated



by these NGO's working in six northern districts of Tamil Nadu namely Thiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Vellore, Thiruvannamalai, Villupuram and Cuddalore and the union territory of Pondicherry. These organizations have been working with Dalits for many years. They aimed to address the basic rights issues of the Dalits in the respective areas. These experiences have proved that in the phase of Neo-Liberal Globalization, isolated efforts would not bring about holistic development among Dalits and these issues have to be addressed at a wider level. As a result these NGO's come together to form the DLRN Network in the year 2001 to unify the efforts of Dalits at a wider level through mutual sharing and learning of both experiences and expertise.

## 2. Key issues

The key issues are namely 1) proper implementation of the prevention of Atrocities (on SC/ST Atrocities Act) of 1989, 2) due share to the Dalits in the common property resources of the villages, 3) reclamation of Panchami land (The land that was assigned to the Dalits during the British rule and which are presently under the occupation of the upper caste Hindus.), 4) monitoring the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and right to food campaign, and 5) campaign against the special economic zones.

### *Methodology Adopted*

Several methodologies were adopted such as 1) grass root mobilization, 2) campaigns and legal rights marches, 3) legal intervention, and 4) advocacy and lobbying.

### *Story One: Reclaiming Panchami Land*

Mrs. Devagi Venkatesan belongs to Dalit community living in Agrakaram village in Vellore district of Tamil Nadu, India says that, "Few years ago my family was migrated to Bangalore City in search of job. During that time an upper caste man grabbed my Depressed Class land or Panchami land (DC land) and he cultivated and enjoyed the yields from my land. The DC land belongs to my ancestors. In 2007, I filed a case in the court against the upper caste man and got a stay order from the court on not to allow the upper caste man to cultivate the land". At the same time, the village Panchayat also passed a resolution in the Gram Sabha meeting saying that the DC land belongs to my family. Now I got the court judgment in favor of my family and myself.

With the support of fifty DLRN cadres, I went to my DC land and started to plough it with the help of tractors. I also sowed corn seeds in my land. There is a possibility of developing irrigation facilities and to cultivate various crops in the future. With the profit gained from the yield, my brother's family and my family will be able to live a peaceful life and give a good education to our four children.

### *Story Two: Atrocity on Dalit women*



Mrs. Kavitha and her son.

A 25-year old Dalit woman named Mrs. Kavitha says that, "My name is Mrs. Kavitha and I belong to a cobbler (Dalit sub-caste) community. I live in a village called Peruncherry, which is located in Vellore district of Tamil Nadu, India. I was graduated from the Government Arts College, Gudiyatham".

My classmate Mr. Murugan and myself loved each other. He belonged to an upper caste community. We got married in a temple on the 10th of August in the year 2003. After marriage, we lived together for a few months in a rented house.

On the fifth of June 2004 a male child was born and was named as Bharath. After that we both were forced to separate by my husband's family members. I filed a case under Schedule Caste/Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) Atrocities ACT, seeking direction to live together with my husband. In this case I got Rs.25, 000 as compensation from the government. I deeply hope to get fair justice and my son will get share in his father's land and his pension. This only happens by filing a case under SC/ST Atrocities Act. With the compensation, I can survive in the society and provide good education to my son Bharath. Right now I and my son are living with my parents.

### *Story Three: The national Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)*



My husband and myself are agricultural laborers. My 14 year-old son, Bharath, is studying in Standard IX and my 12 year-old daughter, Bharath, is studying in Standard VIII at Nookambadi Primary School. My husband and I went for NREGA work to renovate the village pond at noontime. My husband fainted while working in the pond. Our co-workers took him to the hospital but the doctor said that he was dead on arrival and we were too late to the hospital.



Son, mother and daughter.

With my job card I applied in the village Panchayat for death compensation according to the Act and I received Rs.25,000 as a compensation. I have also applied to the unorganized sector department seeking for death aid. I hope to take care of my family and provide quality education to my children.

\* \* \* \* \*

### EDCI and Kwansai Gakuin University Collaboration

Sandesh Sudhakar, EDCI, India, ILDC 2007



*Sandesh Sudhakar of EDCI, India.*

### 1. Introduction

From February 20 to 29, 2008, EDCI organized a cultural exchange program in collaboration with Kwansai Gakuin University based in Osaka, Japan.

It included home stay, visit to elementary schools, debate and active participation in the camp.

The main attendees from EDCI were Manager Coordinator Mr. Sandesh Sudhakar (Nagpur), Program Coordinator Mr. Shyam (Charmoshi), and administrative staff Mr. Nitin B. Piarejee. Five visiting students from Kwansai Gakuin University, Osaka, Japan were Ms. Maiko (Team Leader), Ms. Mina, Ms. Shiori, Mr. Yujin and Mr. Tama.

Mr. Yujin Shirai, a participant of this program is the son of an AHI volunteer, Mrs. Eriko Shirai, who is now one of the AHI Board of Directors. She is an ex-councilor of Nisshin City. She was also a resource person for ILDC at the Nisshin session. Mr. Yujin saw AHI in which his mother has committed for long years with focus in India.

Charmoshi is located near the banks of Vainganga river, a tributary of Pranhita river which meets davarivari river. It is a tribal habitation blended with natural forest and scenic beauty. The main occupation of this area is agriculture, forestry products, fishing, livestock and paid labor. EDCI is working in this area since last 25 years for the better quality of human life, health, education, environment and sanitation, and water for the people of this region.

### 2. The cultural exchange program

On February 21, 2008 the cultural exchange program was held at the Teachers' Training College in



Local students performed for the visitors.

Chamorshi. Students welcomed the EDCI staff and the Japanese students with flowers and garlands, followed by lamp lighting ceremony and folkdance.



Local students presented its culture, lifestyle, religion, festivals, caste system, and languages in India.

Ms. Maiko shared the gender issue faced by Japan which was illustrated in a chart. The problem faced by the Japanese children was presented by both Ms. Mina and Ms. Shiori. The women status as regards to position or social by the Japanese children in today's Japanese society status and salaries and wages was presented by Mr. Tama and Mr. Yugin. Over 450 students and faculties were present in the program. The students of Kwansai Gakuin University performed a Japanese folk dance.

### **3. Work camp**

The elementary school children welcomed the visiting students. On February 22, 2008 these students from Japan actively helped the people in constructing a school toilet in Thattri village. The village head (Sarpanch), local people, teachers and EDCI staff joined, too. The Japanese students also distributed free books, pens and pencils to the local elementary school students who are poor.

### **4. Home stay**

An overnight home stay was hosted by the head of the village on the 22nd of February in Thattri village. It is 35 kilometers away from Chamorshi, a tribal dominated area with a population of 700 to 800 people. The purpose of the home stay is to get a feel of what it is like living in a poor village. They were exposed to the daily life of the villagers.

### **5. Visit to an elementary school in Waghdhara**

A school visit in Waghdhara was organized on the 23rd of February. It is about nine kilometers away from Chamorshi. It has 1000 people who were mostly tribal and lived below poverty line. The welcome ceremony highlighted the traditional lazim dance of this area. The Japanese students distributed same school supplies. Kabbadi game was played by the Japanese students and the local people.

### **6. Boys and girls hostel (Asha Sadan)**

They visited the Boys & Girls Hostel Asha Sadan on the 24th of February. All 100 boys and girls from Chamorshi and the neighboring villages are hosted there. They came from poor families and some were orphans. A cultural evening program was held in the

hostel campus. Sweets and school supplies were given to them. Dinner was served.

### **7. Bengali Camp**

A sightseeing was held on February 25 to a 600-year old Shiva Temple in Markhand, in the river bank of Vainganga. Later that day the Women's Self-Help Group (SHG) program was visited in Bengali, 30 kilometers away from Chamorshi. The SHG activities were presented. They talked about women's participation in income generation, aided by the government and local banks, that uplifted their economic status & enabled their students to go to school. There was an exciting debate (participated by 150 women) between the Japanese students and the SHG about women's status.

### **8. Sayonara (Goodbye) Chamorshi**

February 26 was the "Sayonara" day. Before that formal sayonara, a sightseeing around the city and some tourists spots was organized for the Japanese students. Finally, a farewell program was hosted by EDCI at the Chamorshi Office Hall. The Japanese students shared their views and experiences and the things that they learned during the five-day stay in Chamorshi. It was a touching moment for EDCI members and the Japanese students. After lunch, we bid sayonara to Chamorshi.



Japanese students making toilets.

### **9. Interaction with the youth in Parshivni**

EDCI is also working in Parshivni for the last 25 years in order to better their quality of life, health, education, education and sanitation. An interaction with the local youth was organized on the 27th of



February. The main highlight of this event was to provide a venue for interaction among the local youth and the Japanese students. The interaction revolved on the areas of gender, culture, marriage ceremony, economic situation, youth, and technology of both Japan and India. After this activity, the Japanese students were taken to the Pench Dam and Ramteke Temple.

### **10. The cultural evening program**

It was in Pragati Center, Nagpur, where the cultural evening program was held. Japanese students once again performed their traditional dance. Some Japanese food and Indian food were served, too. There were also some Japanese and Indian clothes displayed or exhibited. A bon fire culminated the night.

### **Outcome of this study tour program**

The Japanese students and EDCI members alike got a very good and rich exposure by mutually learning from each country's culture, living condition, eating pattern or habit, political situation, gender issues, children's issues, technology and the likes. We hope that this friendship continues to grow stronger than ever so that we can have more opportunities for mutual learning and cooperation. The chance to get exposed to both Japan and Indian situations can be an instrument for the upliftment of better human life, friendly relations and peace.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Janet Pimentel-Paredes INAM, Philippines, ILDC 1995**

The fire in Manila affected INAM Volunteers. On July 21, 2008, Monday, 400 families lost their houses in two barangays, namely barangay 823 and barangay 824. Barangay 823 was the first community where our NGO, the Integrative Medicine for Alternative HealthCare Systems, Philippines, Inc. (INAM) in partnership with Families and Children for Empowerment and Development, was our pilot community in the establishment of the first Community Based Recovery Program in the Philippines.

Drug Addiction was the Number One problem as a result of the survey done by the community people in 2007. This community has more than 1,500 families. In 2007, INAM Philippines through the Community Based Recovery Department (CBRD), Janet Pimentel-Paredes as the main Trainer and

Acupuncture Detoxification Specialist, trained 13 leaders, (10 coming from barangay 823, and three are social workers of FCED), in ear acupuncture for detoxification, also known internationally as the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) Protocol. These leaders received their certificates of completion as EAR ACUPUNCTURE PRACTITIONERS, last September 22, 2007.



The acupuncturists with Janet Paredes.

On April 1, 2008, the first Community Based Recovery Program was formalized in Barangay 823. The community leaders conducted a family and addiction survey, and identified more than 100 drug dependents inside the barangay. The ear acupuncture practitioners were divided into groups, did family home visits and started giving ear acupuncture to identified drug dependents. They also started doing counseling to individuals and families. These families cannot afford rehabilitation in private drug rehab center, while government drug rehabilitation are always full combining children with adults.

It was Monday, July 21, a house in the middle of the barangay was on fire which spread to other nearby houses. 400 houses were burned, six of which were houses of the ear acupuncture practitioners. The house where the fire started was identified as pushers/peddlers of Methamphetamine hydrochloride popularly known as "Shabu" in the community. This was where the fire started which easily spread to the entire community.

The whole day Tuesday, I went around Paco area visiting the different refugee sites where the people were given temporarily shelter. I just couldn't describe in words what I found out, what I saw, and the people I talked to.



Urban poor people are very strong and very resilient. When the practitioners saw me, they were trying to hide the tears from their eyes, I just had to hug all of them. In their words: "Janet, we lost our Ob bag where all our ear acupuncture materials are, our stainless steel plates, all our needles, cotton, alcohol, stainless steel container for alcohol, etc." "how can we treat the drug dependents now?" I comforted them and told them, we will be able to recover all that, what is important now is that they are all safe, no one was hurt".

I took pictures of the burned area. I was guided by the social workers of FCED inside barangay 823. I had to walk in flooded, narrow street, the area was flooded by water from the fire trucks the day before. Only the fire hoses can reach the place, fire trucks couldn't enter the small narrow streets.

The houses I use to pass whenever we hold meetings in the barangay hall are all gone now. Community people just kept going back to the site where their houses use to be, trying to salvage whatever they can from the ruins. I can only say a short prayer thanking the Lord how lucky I am that I can still sleep comfortably in our apartment in U.P.

Monday when I received calls from the leaders of the barangay saying "Ms. Janet, our house is burning now". "mam janet, we lost our house in the fire", "janet, one house away and our house shall be burned, we brought out our Sto. Nino statue, prayed hard, our house was saved!"

Visiting the temporary shelters in Paco, I was able to locate some of the leaders I trained in the NADA protocol. I saw Fe, one of the sharp shooters in ear acupuncture, very good in point location, her whole family in a basketball court, with old carton boxes as their mats to sleep on. Her grandchildren, naked, no clothes were saved on time. I saw Daisy and Minda who were spared of the fire, helping out other victims. I saw Erlin, an active practitioner, whose mother died before the fire started, her house also burned down. I saw Grace, her face reddish from the heat of the fire, her house also burned down. Her blood pressure was shooting up.

Our work in the community will continue with a temporary delay due to this fire. The community leaders are now soliciting support from different sectors to build their houses again. In due time all these leaders will come to terms where we can sit down and reflect on this unfortunate event. None of

them will leave the barangay. Although they do not own the land, it has been their home all these years.

Thank you for all those kind hearted who have given their donations, in good and in cash. Thank you for my classmates in high school who have started moving to help these victims. What they need now are materials to build their houses such as galvanized iron, plywood, and other materials for building. Please coordinate with INAM Philippines, address 82-A Malakas street, Barangay Pinyahan, Diliman Quezon city, with tel. Nos. 9263356 / 9264810 for your donations.



A woman wearing a very sad face after the fire.

## Here and There

**Bridging Health and Peace**  
**2008 International Leadership Development**  
**Course on Local Governance in Health**  
UI Shiori, Course Coordinator

ILDC 2008 was from September 9 to October 13, 2008 at AHI with 16 participants from Afghanistan (1st to AHI), Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka & Thailand (southern Muslim province). Majority of them were from ongoing conflict areas or post-conflict areas. Some were struggling in the middle of violent conflicts, trying to take neutral stance between conflict parties, & some just restarted health & development activities after long armed conflicts. Tragic experiences & impacts on their lives were vividly said during per-



sonal life sharing and organizational presentations.



ILDC Participants, volunteers and AHI staff.

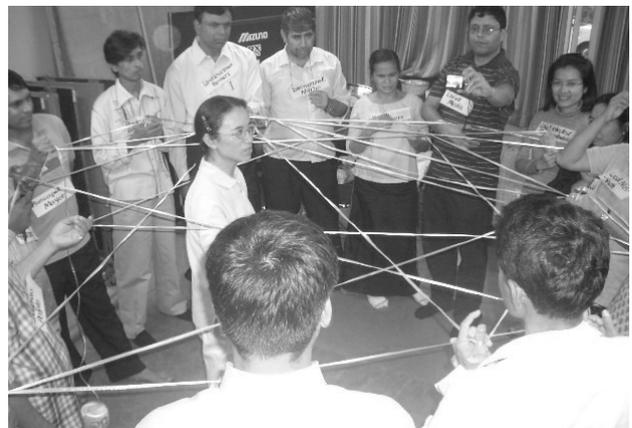
Peace-building issue was highlighted among various key topics discussed in the course such as economic globalization and health, health system & policy trends, PO-building & sustainability, multi-sectoral collaboration for health and development, organizational management and leadership. The participants reconfirmed the role of health sector and health workers have edge for conflict prevention and peace building, and that incorporation of peace building component in on-going health and development activities was important.

Example, in Afghanistan, there was a special cease-fire day realized for immunization activity. In Nepal, during the health service for children, both government and anti-government militaries did not disturb their work. The Filipino participants shared that health volunteers are very well respected by the villagers. These health volunteers were consulted not only health concerns but also other very personal problems. Sri Lankan participants emphasized the importance of integrating peace and other development activities. All participants nodded. A mental health doctor from Thailand presented a case of community-based mental health care involving village health volunteers and schoolteachers. She shared some knowledge and skills on stress management, which most of the participants decided to introduce in their own organizations and working areas.

For AHI, a case of AHI-NCHP (Cambodian Ministry of Health counterpart of AHI) joint training for health workers from former conflicting groups to participatory health training and observing the process of reconciliation was shared. Very unique efforts of declaring "Peace Zone" or "Space for Peace" by one village or by a group of neighboring villages in Muslim Mindanao region in the Philippines was also shared by an AHI facilitator who visited those

areas earlier this year.

Promoting local governance in health is one of the ways to build a firm model for building trust relationship among various actors for common a goal. Fairer health services to all, especially the poor and marginalized also contribute to reduce the ever widening gap caused by economic globalization, competition for resources, weaker role of states, and violence. Strong desires for peace were expressed and discussed by both ILDC participants and the Japanese citizens who joined the dialogue programs and the AHI Open House. We all confirmed that we need to build trusting relationship among people and work together for peace beyond country borders.



The ILDC participants in one session with Ms. Ui Shi-ori (center).

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### **Good Opportunity to feel Solidarity as Asians (A dialogue program between ILDC participants and the Japanese people)**

Makiko Torikai, AHI

September 23, 2008, the dialogue program for ILDC participants and the Japanese people was held in AHI from 1:30 to 6:00 p.m. Sixteen health and development workers from seven Asian countries and 47 Japanese people ranging from university students to retirees attended. People formed seven small groups with two to three ILDC participants as resource persons.

A three-hour group discussion took place. Each group tackled some topics like health activities in conflict-affected areas, women's rights in Asian countries, how to build Peoples Organizations and the role of NGOs. The ILDC participants introduced



to the Japanese the people's situation in their areas covered, activities, and all. Many Japanese were impressed by the passion of ILDC participants to better the people's situation. Some non-ILDC participants found that the people of other Asian countries had rich wisdom or experiences that the Japanese people should learn from.



Moment of informative and rich discussion.

For some people, both the Japanese and the ILDC participants, three hours were not enough to have further discussion. Generally, they were pleased to have a heart to heart talk with the people from other Asian countries through this venue. We hope this program would be a good opportunity for the people to keep the feeling of solidarity as Asians.

INAM in promoting Philippine Integrative Medicine in the communities in the National Capital Region (NCR), Central Luzon and Northern Luzon, underwent training from March 25 to 27, 2008.

We currently conducted an Intracutaneous Therapy Needle (ICN) training here in Baguio City. We have 16 women participants. Twelve of whom are mostly community health workers working in different rural and urban poor communities in the NCR, two staff of INAM and two staff of SARILAYA. The participants are some representatives of people's organizations, non-government organizations (NGOs) and SARILAYA. The training workshop is part of my output as per Action Plan made during my attendance to the Oriental Medicine Course (OMC) at the Kagami Clinic in Japan through the generosity of AHI. The trainees or participants were very willing to use the ICN as part of their services in the communities. And they find ICN as a useful modality for treating common conditions in their respective communities.

The present problem though is the availability of ICN needles which they can immediately use when they go back to their communities. Although I have taught them how to make the ICN, it is very important that these communities shall be able to sustain their services as well as their skills. Especially that these women are serving hundreds of families in their communities in the Philippines.

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## NEWS FROM FRIENDS

**Maricris Parungao**

*INAM, Philippines, ILDC & OMC 2006*



Greetings from Baguio City, the summer capital of the Philippines! I hope you are all doing well. I am happy to inform you that the Integrative Medicine for Alternative Health Care (INAM) and SARILAYA, a women's organization and partner of

**Md. Rafiqul Alam Mollah (Rati)**

*Association for Community Advancement Strategy (ACAS), Bangladesh, ILDC 1991*

I participated and completed the International Leadership Development Course (ILDC) organized by AHI in 1991. Presently I have been working with ACAS as chairman. ACAS is a new and small organization working in 1 upazila (Sub District) in Jamalpur district adjacent to the northern region of Bangladesh and Indian border with Meghalaya.

ACAS is an acronym for Association for Community Advancement Strategy. ACAS is a Bangla word which means sky. It is a non-governmental, non-political and non-profitable voluntary organization situated in Jamalpur district adjacent to the northern region of Bangladesh and Indian border with Meghalaya. The organization was established in



2007 with an initiative of some benevolent and enthusiastic persons. It was established considering political conflict, social disunity, unemployment and other socio-economic problems such as early marriage, multiple marriage, dowry, gender discrimination, women and child violence, ill health, environmental pollution, natural disasters and less access to the services and markets. For governing well the organization it has a general committee consisting 27 male and female members and an executive committee of 11 members (9 male and 2 female). ACAS is registered under the Department of Social Services (DSS) of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

ACAS was established on a collective initiative. It has knowledgeable, skilled, experienced and committed personnel who are working hard for reaching an inhabitable society. It is a small and new but familiar organization has a good relationship with local administration, GOB line departments, local government, program participants and the community as a whole. ACAS operates through the support from donors and other stakeholders in order to implement need based sustainable program for the community especially poor and disadvantaged.

The organization has been implementing different development activities in community led approach. It has significant activities on people's health. For running the activities more successfully with people's participation we would like to maintain a meaningful relationship with AHI. My mailing address is: ACAS, Boira, Sarishabari, Jamalpur, Bangladesh.

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**Narendra Kumal Biswal**

*ANITRA Trust, India*

*ILDC 1988*

Hello my friends in AHI, Japan! I wish you, your families and friends a very good health and happiness. Thank you for wishing me on my birthday. I am alright working for ANITRA Trust for the last two years. I'm stationed at Deenabandhupuram field office. Two years before I joined ANITRA Trust in April, 2007, I spent almost eight years in my village involved in agriculture. My village in Orissa does not have good postal service or other mode of communication facility. Hence, I almost missed the AHI English newsletter. It is a happier reunion that I just have received the newsletter once again sent in

my name. Though I was not getting it in my name for long period, I occasionally read it from my friends like Omana Jose (ILDC 1999) and Jagannatha Raju (ILDC 1986) when I meet them. It is an untiring effort that AHI is involved in continuously publishing the newsletter for so many years. Another great effort that AHI is into is wishing all its alumni on their birthdays year after year. Everybody I met among AHI alumni have praised it a lot.

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**Chea THY**

*Plan International, Cambodia, ILDC 1995*



I told UI that I will attend the AHI Alumni meeting on October 31, 2008 but turned out to be impossible. My organization allowed me to attend the 2008 American Public Health Annual (Alpha) Meeting held on October 26 to 29, 2008 in San Diego, California, USA. I went back to Phnom Penh on August 30 to 31 in the afternoon. So, I cannot attend the AHI alumni meeting on the 31st of October. Anyhow, thank you for the invitation. I appreciated that AHI has brought about a lot of changes in capacity building of human resources in developing countries. Those who had been trained by AHI and their alumni have continuously utilize those acquired skills and knowledge to train other colleagues and relevant stakeholders in their respective countries and working areas. I appreciate AHI for publishing useful newsletters to share a lot of information. I got my copy and for Dr. Vannarith. Some information are really useful.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Narayan Prasad Maharjan**

*National Churches Fellowship (NCF), Nepal,*

*ILDC 1980*

For Dr. Kawahara, loving Namaste! Thanks for your greeting cards. I was very excited to get it. I am in Kathmandu working as General Secretary of National Churches Fellowship of Nepal. God sent me to serve the churches of Nepal in order to facilitate spirituality and social well-being. I hope you are in good health. I often remember your better half for her generosity. I met her in Nepal in my campus



where I was lecturing (Tansen) on her visit. I often remember you in my prayer so as your son and daughter's family. Please convey my love to them.

My son Reuben is completing his final semester theory then after he will enter a Medical Course. My younger son is working for INF Nepal in mid-western region, married and have a baby. Maya my wife often remembers you. She is retired from Tansen Mission Hospital working for more than 20 years in the pediatric consultation Out-Patient Department. She was there when you visited and worked in the hospital. Tansen and Okhaldhunga hospitals agreement is in pending. The government has new policies so it is not certain that the agreement takes place. God knows what will happen.

### *The General Secretary's NCF Nepal Updates*

My pleasure to update you about NCF Nepal. Internal management of the office was well. Policies were approved and implemented, strategic plan and manifesto were reviewed and the annual plan was proposed.

Files were checked and organized and the correspondence database was updated. The finance staff prepared the data of donors' status for the past 10 years. Some amount was funded for conferences of various types, churches buildings, and bridge construction and for general admission, non-formal education, drinking water, welfare and relief. But for the last five years it was almost zero. The remaining work for the church building in Banke and a bridge in Gorkha were postponed for over a year due to lacked of communication with the partners. We came in touch with almost all partners.

We had meetings at various levels, internal departmental meetings and staff meetings, to discuss.

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### **TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE... Calling All AHI Alumni !!!**

The world needs to hear from your field health and development work stories. You may find a short spare time to sit down and write. Here are

some themes that you might want to write about. Please feel free to ask us if your topic is not in the list. **SUBMIT ARTICLES ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 28, 2009.**

- **Peace and Development (next issue)**
- **The Effects of Global Economic Crisis to Community Health & Development (New)**
- **Children Development Program (New)**
- Trends in Development and Self-Help Supporting Groups
- Disaster, Health Vulnerability and Post Disaster Initiatives
- Local Health Board/Local Health Committee or Local Special Bodies
- Indigenous Approaches and Mechanisms for Collective Community Action
- Alternative Approaches to Agriculture
- Re-energizing People's Organizations and Expanding their Relevance to Health and Development

**IMPORTANT REMINDER!** Kindly write in the following manner. **PHOTOS MUST BE IN JPEG FORMAT, GRAYSCALE, WRITE SHORT CAPTION, SEND BY EMAIL WITH YOUR ARTICLE. OR SEND HARD COPY BY POST.**

## *Snap Survey*

Please email us the themes that you want in the AHI English Newsletter. Kindly answer the following:

- 1.) What would you like to know or hear from other AHI alumni?
- 2.) Do you have any model community or person (leader or not) or project that you are proud or happy to share to others?
- 3.) Are you interested in writing an article? If yes, please specify.

to Editor Joy A. BASTIAN and the Co-editor Kyoko SHIMIZU, AHI  
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