



**LOW COST SUSTAINABLE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT :
AN EXPERIENCE**



PARIVARTHANA

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- **Support to Organic Farming:** To produce poison free food articles and to sustain agriculture, environment friendly organic farming is now attracting world population. Hence to support organic farming, required agriculture extension support and use of organic manure and pesticides were encouraged. Up to now, 830 vermi - compost units were constructed by involving 830 farmers in the area. So also, encouraged farmers to use cow-dung, cow-urine, neem, pangamea, garlic and zinger based bio-pesticides to control pest attacks in agriculture crops. Now farmers are finding the uses of organic manure and bio-pesticides and developing hopes in agriculture. As a result of these activities annually around Rs. 80 - 90 lakhs saved from vermi-compost and bio-pesticides use. These efforts are helping to cut down the cost of agricultural production, creation of safe environment specially availability of safe drinking water, enrichment of soil and production of poison free food articles for consumption.

- **Adoption of Fuel Efficient Chullas:** To save environment and energy, tree planting is one activity and tree saving is another activity. Therefore, one of the traditional chulla has been improved with modern techniques and constructed for 1800 households in the area. The chullas are popularly known as Eco-chullas. These chullas are very useful for saving firewood, minimizing indoor pollution and drudgery of firewood collection and vessel cleaning. As a result, it helps to improve the health conditions of women and children. Also these chullas help to save rural energy, water and time of the households.

- **Animal Husbandry:** Animal Husbandry occupation is next to agriculture in rural areas. People have the skills in rearing milch animals/cows, sheep and goats for getting additional income to the family. Therefore, this activity has been encouraged massively under Government subsidy schemes and bank loans for 25 groups. Where groups does not have this facility for them with the support of Charities Advisory Trust (CAT) London supported to purchase 2-3 sheep for making sheep flock culture. Under CAT programme, 960 beneficiaries of 58 groups were assisted for sheep rearing.

- **Herbal Medicine Propagation:** Allopathic medicine is not the only solution for curing the diseases. Herbal medicines also cure diseases very effectively and cost is very less. Therefore, herbal medicines were propagated to control common diseases and ailments specially joint pains, back pains, piles, allergy and asthma etc. The SHG women members, know these medicines and using them for treating common ailments and diseases.

- **Adult Education:** In the beginning 23 adult education centers were initiated to provide minimum literacy to the rural women folk. As a result, SHG women members were able to learn to read and write to some extent. It helps them to carry their day-to-day affairs without any dependency on others.

- **Linkage of Government Schemes:** As a result of awareness generation and peoples collectives, the people could able to know their rights and responsibilities. Due to the efforts of the individual beneficiaries and their leaders, many have got housing facility, subsidy loans, educational facilities, rural roads, drinking water facility, electricity connections, transportation facility, schools and childcare centers and health support services etc. from various Government departments and banks.

- **Struggles and Movements:** In rural areas liquor selling is one of the major problem as it creates poverty and social problems with in the family and in the society. Therefore, to stop arrack selling in villages, protests were organised from village to district level and at the state level too in collaboration with other organisations. As a result, some arrack shops were closed in certain villages.

Likewise, during Gram Panchayat elections 'people's manifesto' was released by the people's collectives stating their priorities and programmes for their overall development in rural areas. As a result, vote seeking candidates have the tasted the priorities of people and committed to fulfill their aspiration.

Impact

The work of Parivarthana has benefited the target groups and communities concerned. The work is having spread effect in the area. Many NGOs and Government Departments have included these activities in their policies and programmes as they are very useful to the rural poor and needy.

Funding

Parivarthana's activities rely on contributions and funds from individuals and institutions. Till now Christian Aid, London, CAPART-RC, Dharwad, TEDAKHA Trust, Mysore, Charities Advisory Trust / Good Gifts Catalogue, London were the major supporting Donor Agencies who supports Parivarthana in all these years. Apart from these institutions, local individuals and beneficiaries were also contributed. The initial annual budget of Parivarthana was about Rs. 5 - 6 lakhs and at present annual budget is around Rs. 40 lakhs.

The Future

The development programmes taken up by the organisation are based on the needs of the communities concerned and the skills and resources available with them. Wherever possible they have been encouraged to avail bank credit and existing government facilities. However, there are number of projects like tree planting, horticulture, soil and water conservation, organic farming, poor children's education, irrigation, rural technology transfer, rural energy, animal husbandry and income generating activities etc. needs large funds by the National and International agencies including Government and individual donors. The organisation is grateful to those agencies and individuals which have rendered generous support in the past and sincerely hopes that, there will be adequate flow of funds to carry out the meaningful activities to help the rural poor and needy by extending its work to other areas where there is need.



Introduction

Parivarthana is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) established in the year 1988 based in Hunsur. It was set-up by a group of committed young development professionals and social workers with a view to work for poverty alleviation, environment protection and sustainable rural development under the leadership of **Mr. G. S. Raje Gowda**, one of the founder. In the past Sixteen years the organisation has successfully developed several low cost eco-friendly sustainable rural development models.

The Beginning

Once the organisation formally established, it has initiated its work in Hunsur block with a small local support. And then during 1990 with the support of Christian Aid, London the work carried further with full swing to help the poor and needy.

Hunsur Block is in Mysore District, Karnataka. It comes in 'Semi Malnad' zone. Hunsur is known for rich forest resources at one time. The annual rainfall is about 630mm. The famous Nagarahole National Park (now Rajiv Gandhi National Park) is in edge of the Hunsur which is world eco-sensitive zone.

Majority of the population are depending on agriculture for their livelihood. Tobacco is the major crop, followed by food crops and horticulture plantations in low lines. As a result of massive cultivation of tobacco the agriculture land become unfertile, the forest resources diminished and ground water table gone down in the area. As a result the food security of the people is in dilemma and agriculture is slowly losing its relevance. It means that large majority of the rural population are under pressure for their sustainable livelihood. In this critical situation, **Parivarthana** initiated its work in a cluster of 50 villages covering 10,000 population with the following objectives.

- To Sensitize rural mass by organising awareness camps and trainings.
- To Organise people's collectives to address their issues and to find solutions through mutual help and co-operation.
- To Minimize poverty and starvation.
- To Provide food security through alternative eco-friendly sustainable agriculture..
- To protect environment for sustainable rural livelihood base and development.

Main Activities

1. Capacity Building:

Trainings and awareness camps are integral part of any development initiatives to envisage people's participation. Hence a series of trainings, workshops, mass awareness camps and conventions were organised on various development issues like poverty, ill health, illiteracy, unemployment, food security, drinking water, social problems, environment issues and agriculture problems etc., in the working area to sensitize rural mass about their issues and possible solutions. As a result of these activities, people have started realizing their issues and finding solutions collectively by using available resources.

2. People's organisations for self - reliance:

Depending on external agencies for the development of people is not suitable and sustainable. Therefore, people must have their own collectives to address their issues and find possible solutions by mutual help and co-operation. Accordingly in selected 50 villages, 108 Women Self-Help groups were organised. The central activity of these groups is small savings and self-help credit. And again to sustain these groups, 7 cluster level Apex Bodies were created and also at block level one Mahila Swasahaya Abhivrudhi Kendra (Women Self-Help Development Center) established to sustained the activities in place of Parivarthana as an withdrawal strategy when the work is withdrawn. Parivarthana partially withdrawn its support to these collectives and the block level Mahila Swasahaya Abhivrudhi Kendra is looking after with its own membership based resources.

Now at the ground level 108 SHGs are managing about Rs. 1.5 crore savings and credit funds to meet their development needs like agriculture, housing, children education, health, cattle, marriages, festivals, gold assets, vessels, electric connections and such other needs. So also, 7 Apex Bodies are managing Rs.8.5 lakhs by providing and collecting revolving funds to the needy SHG's at the grass root level and whatever income comes from this activity has been contributed to block level people's organisation for managing required staff and other development needs.

3. Development Activities:

- Soil and Water Conservation:** Soil and Water resources are the life line of rural mass. Their livelihood depends on these resources. Therefore, in slopy and degraded lands, soil and water conservation measures were taken up by involving individual farmers to shap their own

agricultural lands. Here, farm bunds, rain water canals, gully checks, farm ponds and cattle ponds desilting works were carried out on self-help basis and with external funding support wherever necessary. Nearly 430 acres of land has been covered under this activity. As a result of these soil and water conservation measures agriculture productivity increased and ground water level improved.

- Massive Tree Planting:** Trees are the natural conservators of environment. Specially trees helps in production of bio-mass which helps to improve the soil fertility due to micro-organisms activity and also to create bio-diversity. Bio-diversity and bio-mass are very essential for sustainable agriculture and to produce poison free food articles. More than all in minimizing global warming, trees are very essential. Therefore, massive tree planting activity has been taken up on agro / farm forestry models, in agriculture lands, waste lands and backyards with the support of funding. Tree nurseries have been raised in every village by involving SHG women members and distributed to 1300 farmers in the area. Up to now 8,75,000 different forest variety tree saplings were raised and distributed to farmers for planting. The survival rate is around 50%. The value of survived plants at the present market price is around Rs.60 - 65 crores. These trees are helping for improvement of local environment and as well as global environment, particularly soil enrichment, recharge of ground water, creation of cool weather, production of manure and bio-pesticides, fodder for cattle, fire wood, and saving electricity and fossil fuel energies etc.
- Horticulture Development:** Today agriculture is nothing but a gambling and there is no assured income whatever may be the land extent due to practice of chemical farming and destruction of natural resources like land, water and vegetation. Therefore, farmers are looking for alternative activities which gives them sustained income. To improve the environment and to earn sustained income, horticulture development looks to be a good alternative activity and so also to replace harmful tobacco cultivation. Therefore, massive horticulture tree plantations have been encouraged in irrigated lands co-conut and arecanut and in dry lands mango, tamarind and cashew plantations were encouraged. Upto now 27,500 horticulture plants provided to 1175 farmers. 22,000 are old plantations and they are in yielding stage and 5,500 are new plantations. The survival rate of horticulture plants is around 60% in dry lands and in irrigated lands 90%. The expected annual income from the survived horticulture plants is around Rs.70 - 80 lakhs per year.